

LEAVES FROM A DIARY
IN LOWER BENGAL



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LEAVES FROM A DIARY
IN
LOWER BENGAL



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LEAVES FROM A DIARY

IN

LOWER BENGAL

By C. S.

(Retired)

*WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS FROM SKETCHES BY THE AUTHOR,
INCLUDING ETCHINGS BY ROBERT FARREN*

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TO THE MEMORY OF
MY FATHER AND MOTHER
FOR WHOM
THE DIARY WAS FIRST WRITTEN

INTRODUCTION

THE following pages have been abstracted from an old Diary kept for the perusal of friends at home, during the first eight years of Indian service, and it is thought that some account of the daily life of a civilian in Lower Bengal may not be without interest to the public, so many of whom are now, in one way or other, connected with our Eastern Dependency.

Great nonsense has in days gone by been written or talked about the Gorgeous East, which is now regarded in a more prosaic light; but there is no need to go into the opposite extreme and look upon India as a “land of regrets”—a place of exile which offers few or no compensations for the loss of home surroundings. As for health, there is no reason why a man with a good constitution and wholesome love of outdoor occupations should not, living temperately and with prudence, be at least as well as one whose lot is cast in great cities at home; the duties and responsibilities of an Indian career are such as most would find interesting; and he must be strangely constituted who could feel no pride in belonging to so fine a service as the “I.C.S.,” or in taking part, however small, in the conduct of that great enterprise, the Government of India.

In Bengal as elsewhere, a life of regular employment means a good deal of monotonous routine, varied occasionally by more lively episodes.

The narration of these may perhaps be found amusing, while the sketches should help the reader to realise the scenes and understand the incidents described in the text.

The use of initials not being convenient, in some cases real names are given—in others, these are thinly disguised so as to be recognisable by those who know the persons referred to.

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LEAVES FROM A DIARY IN LOWER BENGAL

CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTORY.—THE VOYAGE OUT.—1862.

DESTINED for my father's business, I was for a time a regular frequenter of the City, but soon took a strong dislike to the occupation and its surroundings. Books of adventure were my favourite reading ; my thoughts ran on the delights of travel, and the dreariness of life at a desk, among bricks and mortar ; I became moody and discontented, and my heart was not in my work. My father, though no doubt disappointed, would not force my inclinations, and consented to a suggestion, made by my brother, that I should try for the Indian Civil Service, lately thrown open to public competition. How grateful I felt to that brother, and how I revelled in the thought that smoky London would soon be a thing of the past, and an Indian career before me, with all its bright possibilities !

I went up to Cambridge in October, 1860, and the next few months were spent in polishing up the "humanities," which had got rather rusty since I left school. At the examination in 1861 I was fortunate enough to take a fair place, and after this another year was spent at Cambridge, getting up the special subjects for India. The final examination was held in 1862, and I well remember walking up and down outside Willis's Rooms with some of my companions in misery, nervously discussing our chances of success. One of these passed very high, and is now Governor of a large Province, with a

handle to his name. I wonder if he ever recollects what we then felt. When the list came out, I found that I had gone up three places; and having got through the medical examination and other preliminaries, at last realised the fact that I was a member of Her Majesty's Indian Civil Service. My place in the list entitled me to a choice of Presidencies, and, like most of those so privileged, I elected for Bengal. In due course my covenant was executed, and I received from the India Office a parchment document notifying my appointment, and permitting me to proceed to India overland on the 20th October, which date saw me on board the good ship *Ripon*, bound for Alexandria and the Far East.

The *Ripon* was a comfortable ship of some 2,000 tons, one of the last of the old paddle steamers of the P. and O. Company, and had done duty as a transport, having taken the Grenadier Guards to the Crimea in 1854. Hurricane decks were not yet in vogue; but the spacious flush deck made a fine promenade; the saloon was wide and roomy, with a double row of tables. She was an old-fashioned ship in more ways than one. Instead of a clanging bell, a bugle was sounded at meal-times, and breakfast and dinner were announced by strains of the "Perfect Cure," "Roast Beef of Old England," or other popular melodies. There was a good band of musical stewards, which played of an evening in the saloon, and sometimes on deck when the weather was fine. The *Ripon* carried a European crew, and her captain and officers were pleasant, gentlemanly fellows.

The Suez Canal was not yet open: the French Messageries steamers were but just beginning to run, and the P. and O. monopoly of passenger traffic by the overland route had not been seriously infringed. Heavy merchandise still went round the Cape, the route through Egypt being mostly used by passengers and for the more valuable but less bulky kinds of cargo. Steamers, especially of the older class to which the *Ripon* belonged, were designed to carry passengers rather than goods; steam-winchies, donkey engines, cranes and other machines did not crowd up the deck; and upstairs at least there was plenty of room. The cabins, it is true, were pretty full. Ours was on the lower deck, and my berth was one of four, the others being occupied by a barrister going to Calcutta, an indigo planter bound for Patna, and a subaltern of the 42nd

Highlanders¹ on his way to join his regiment at Dugshai, in the Himalayas.

We did not escape the traditional tossing in the "Bay," and the "fiddles" were on the tables for some days after leaving Southampton. But we got our sea-legs in a day or two, and had a fair run down the coast of Portugal. Our first view of the Rock of Gibraltar was very impressive. Here lay the *Warrior* and *Black Prince*, majestic yet graceful vessels, as like as two peas, very different from the unwieldy structures now called battleships. Not far from these was the Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, an insignificant-looking craft compared with the big ironclads, but which gave the North a good deal of trouble during the Civil War in America.

The day after leaving Gibraltar we got a regular "sneezer"—head-wind and sea, with driving showers of rain—a nasty specimen of weather that often visits the blue Mediterranean, as our captain facetiously called it. Some of *us* certainly looked blue. The deck was simply flooded, while the saloon and cabins below (the ports being shut) were unbearably close and stuffy. So for one day we had rather a bad time; but with this exception the weather was fair.

We coaled at Malta, and should have made a very good run to Egypt but for an accident to the machinery near Alexandria, which delayed us some hours. We got along with one engine, however, and arrived after all before the *Vectis* from Marseilles.

The Hôtel de l'Europe was very full, and some of us had to be content with a shake-down in a bath-room, where, with high temperature and lively mosquitoes, it was a case of sleeping under difficulties. With daylight, however, our troubles were forgotten, and we prepared to make the most of our time in Alexandria. The Egyptian donkeys are better mounts than their brethren in the old country, and there were plenty to choose from. Indeed, the difficulty was to make a selection with the donkey-boys crowding round, yelling and jabbering, each trying to drag his long-suffering beast under your nose, and all but lifting you bodily into the saddle. The only thing to be done was to make a dive for the nearest donkey, jump on his back, and be off—the attendant soon disengaged

¹ Poor C——! A few years ago he fell in Egypt, with the rank of Colonel, in an affair not long after Tel-el-Kebir, in which action he had behaved very gallantly.

himself from the mob and followed. The animal's paces were easy and free; the saddle, a padded arrangement with a high boss in front, covered with a capacious saddle-cloth, was comfortable enough, but the rider had to take rather a back seat. Armed with sticks, the donkey-boys ran behind, belabouring the donkeys, and bawling out to clear the way—a ragged but merry lot, in flowing robes (not over clean) something like a night-shirt, with fez caps or turbans, bare legs and feet, light of limb, and active as monkeys. These ragamuffins pick up the latest slang names from outward-bound passengers, and bestow them on their donkeys. One was “Captain Snooks,” another “Yankee Doodle,” and so on. It was a lively party—coats and pugrees flying in the wind—some of the riders holding on to the saddle, our portly dragoman leading the way, sitting his donkey with dignity and equilibrium derived from long practice, and grasping his stick as if it were a Field Marshal's bâton at least. We visited Pompey's Pillar, said to be hewn out of a single block of granite, which stands outside the town on an eminence overlooking Lake Mareotis and the Mahmoudieh Canal; also Cleopatra's Needle, or Needles rather, for there were then two obelisks, one standing, the other lying in the sand. This, our guide told us, was going to be taken to England, and is no doubt the one that now adorns the Thames Embankment.

From Alexandria we went by rail to Cairo, where clean sheets and mosquito curtains in a fine airy room at Shepherd's Hotel made amends for the discomforts of the previous night. One or two of the ship's company made an expedition to the Pyramids, but we preferred a good night's rest, and contented ourselves with a distant view from the high ground outside the Mosque—the Mameluke's leap or thereabouts. The prospect was very fine, extending over the town of Cairo, the open country and the Nile, then in flood; the distant Pyramids; and beyond all the Desert, stretching away to the horizon, where the glare of the yellow sand faded gradually into the blue of a cloudless sky. The interior of the Mosque was one huge dome, gorgeously decorated in gold and colours, with Arabic characters, perhaps texts from the Koran, cunningly wrought among the intricacies of the design. Many lamps hung from the vaulted roof by supports that in the vast space looked like gossamer threads, vanishing in the gloom above. Mahomedans enter barefoot: we were admitted with our boots encased in list slippers.



DONKEY RIDE AT ALEXANDRIA.

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Our way back to the hotel lay through the bazaar, a labyrinth of narrow, crooked streets and lanes, some covered in with rafters, the sky showing through the chinks overhead. These roofed alleys and adjacent thoroughfares were thronged with passing figures in all sorts of strange dress and undress—ghostly-looking women, hooded and veiled like the False Prophet of Khorasan, with eye-holes cut in the drapery that hid the face, some riding astride on donkeys; half-naked porters; foot passengers and horsemen; people in carriages with men running before to clear the way; strings of laden camels;—and through this motley crowd our donkeys careered at top speed, the drivers running like deer and yelling like fiends behind them. How we got through without coming to grief is a mystery. I cannoned once against a loaded camel, but rebounded without damage, and on we went as before. At last we emerged into the European quarter—fine wide thoroughfares with shady avenues and public gardens, a pleasant contrast to the crowded bazaar,—and were not sorry to get back to Shepherd's Hotel. The streets of Cairo were not then lighted, and as it grew dark the effect of paper lanterns carried about was very pretty. An Egyptian military band was playing in the gardens—wild music, but not unpleasing. It was a lovely moonlight night; the air soft and pleasant; and we thoroughly enjoyed our brief stay in the Holy City. The Marseilles passengers from the *Vectis* joined us at Cairo—among them other civilians, bound for India like myself, though not all for Bengal.

Next day we went on to Suez, the journey across the Desert (the caravan being a thing of the past) being comfortably if prosaically performed in a railway carriage built at Birmingham, and not differing much from those at home except in having venetian blinds and a double roof. The sun was hot, but there was a fresh breeze, and the dryness of the air made the heat quite tolerable. The monotony of the view was broken by sand hills and ridges on which the sun threw delicate and changing tints; and the utter solitude had at least the charm of variety to eyes accustomed to crowded scenes. Near Suez the landscape becomes bolder, rocky hills bordering the gulf on both sides. Dinner was served at the hotel (under P. and O. management) in a spacious courtyard with ample awnings, amid shrubs and plants, tastefully arranged, refreshing and restful to the eyes after the glare of the sandy wastes. The steamer

for Calcutta was lying at anchor in the Gulf, and a steam tender took passengers and luggage on board.

The *Nubia*, to which vessel we were now transferred, was a full-rigged ship some 100 tons bigger than the *Ripon*, with a native crew, officered of course by Europeans. In the ante-canal days the services east and west of Suez were distinct, ships on the home side being manned with Europeans, those on the other with Lascars. Though larger than our old ship, the *Nubia* was hardly so comfortable. Long and narrow, her decks were less roomy, and lofty bulwarks made them look cramped: the saloon was narrower, and had one row of tables only. Packing had been pretty close on the *Ripon*, but now it was a still tighter fit. My cabin contained five berths, with *one* washstand for the lot. This calls to mind a picture in *Punch* of a crowded cabin with several toilets going on at once, and below the P. and O. motto "*Quis separabit?*". Getting up in the morning was necessarily a matter of arrangement. A story is told of a party of ladies occupying one cabin among whom a question arose, as to which was entitled to first use of the common washstand, and the dispute waxed warm. As none of the claimants would yield, the matter was referred to the captain, who decided that on the principle of seniority the *eldest* ought to have first wash. Next morning the stewardess reported that none of the ladies would get up!

At this season the outward bound ships are always full; and including the Marseilles passengers the ship's company was a large one. The after saloon was not big enough for the whole number, and some twenty first-class passengers had to mess in the fore-saloon. The *Nubia* carried no regular band; a bell replaced the bugle at meal-times; the feeding hours were rather different; and lights were put out at 10 instead of 11.

A voyage down the Red Sea is usually more hot than eventful. The sun now became so powerful, that even with double awnings the air on deck was often like a furnace; and the brass fittings on the bulwarks were quite hot to the touch. This is the most trying part of the voyage, and often fatal to invalids homeward bound. September is considered the worst month, but much depends on the wind. With a following breeze, when the steamer's smoke hangs like a pall overhead, the atmosphere becomes stifling, and it is said that ships have been turned round and



"Spread-eagled" in the
Rigging.
C.B. 9/14.
-11.7.14

run for a time the reverse way, to give crew and passengers a breath of air. How the stokers and coal-trimmers stand it, is a marvel. The engine-room is bad enough; but the stoke-hole in the Red Sea must be far worse. The stokers are "Seedee boys," full blooded African negroes, who can endure heat better than most people. But even these have to be relieved at intervals, and seeing them come on deck, their half-naked bodies dripping with perspiration, one can realise what an *inferno* it must be below.

But youthful spirits are not much affected by the thermometer, and two of us, fired with ambition, determined to mount the rigging, having got leave from the skipper, who however did not guarantee us against the risk of a "spread-eagle." The mizenmast was first attempted, but the soot from the funnel smoke was too dreadful, and after a short but grimy excursion we desisted, and made for the foremast. Here we got up to the cross-trees, and enjoyed a fine bird's-eye view of the floating world below. Our triumph was short-lived: two parties of Lascars started up the rigging in pursuit, to the delight of those on deck, who greeted us with sarcastic cheers. My companion gave good sport, but was eventually caught and tied up; and I only escaped by handing over two rupees to pay my footing, which satisfied my captors. Our reception on deck was derisively enthusiastic—the state of our garments worthy of a chimney sweep.

The energetic ones got up games and athletics, including leap-frog, jumping, cock-fighting, chalking the line, &c. In cock-fighting the performers paired off two and two, each being fixed up in a squatting position, with a stick passed below his knees and inside his elbows, his wrists being tied with a handkerchief in front of his legs. Two "cocks" were then placed opposite each other, and each tried to get his toes under his adversary's feet, and with a sudden lift to upset him. Once over, the unlucky one had to lie there till somebody picked him up, being helpless as a trussed fowl, while the victor crowed lustily. For chalking the line two nooses were hung from the rigging, into which each competitor put his feet, and walking backwards on his hands till his heels were nearly straight over his head, in this topsy-turvy position had to chalk a line on the deck as far back as possible, returning in the same way to his starting point. Whoever made his mark furthest back without swinging

round or toppling over on his back was the winner. Most of us came to grief in one way or the other ; the best performer was Sir Victor B——, a fine athletic young fellow, who had been second best jumper of his time at Harrow, and was now on a shooting and exploring expedition to the East.

The chief officer was musical ; and though there was no band, as on board the *Ripon*, amateur talent on board was not suffered to remain idle, and evenings were enlivened with music, vocal and instrumental ; now and then a dance was got up, and on one occasion a stage was improvised, and a very creditable performance given of *Box and Cox*, and *Nursey Chickweed* by some of the ship's officers and passengers.

Passing Perim and the Straits, we were not sorry to leave the Red Sea behind and get into the more open and comparatively cool region of the Indian Ocean. We reached Aden late one evening, and it was dark as the ship steamed slowly in, feeling her way with the lead, and signalling with a rocket and blue-light in the bows, which had a very weird effect. A lottery had been got up on the time of arrival—five-shilling tickets, good for a quarter-of-an-hour each—the winning quarter to be that in which the anchor should be let go. This happened in the very last minute of my quarter-of-an-hour, which was agreeable to me, but must have been rather tantalising to the holder of the next ticket. The ship was soon beset with boats, and there arose a perfect Babel—the boatmen fighting and scrambling, some trying to get on board, others shouting invitations to go on shore, and all loudly vociferating. Several came swarming up the gangway ladder, and the more pertinacious were kept off the deck only by the vigorous use of a rope's end. Late as it was, we decided to go ashore, made up a party, and jumped into one of the numerous boats. The boatmen, Somali boys from the African coast, are capital oarsmen, and soon laid us alongside the sea-wall, whence a little half-naked boy piloted us to the hotel. This was kept by Parsees from Bombay, and had a shop attached, with a very miscellaneous stock, comprising European stores, oriental curios, and other articles, at Eastern prices—*i.e.*, to be fixed only after much haggling. After supper some of the party played pool, and two of us got donkeys, and scampered about by the light of a waning moon. It was too dark to see much, except that the surroundings were barren and rocky. Aden has been likened to a cinder-heap, and does not

strike the new comer as an inviting place, though people stationed there have got to like it, but the run on shore was very enjoyable. All were on board again during the small hours, and about 3 a.m. the *Nubia* left for Ceylon.

We were now well out in that part of the Indian Ocean known as the Arabian Sea—our course being a little south of east—in lovely weather, for days hardly a ripple on the water, the great ship sliding through it like oil. Flying fish were numerous, starting out of the sea singly or in shoals, sometimes almost under the bows, skimming like swallows over the surface, their delicate, wing-like fins flashing silver in the sun, each flight covering some 50 yards, and subsiding into the sea with a tiny splash. Our steward said he found these fish in the cabin sometimes when making the beds. If this was not a yarn, they must have come in through the ports, perhaps attracted by the light. Off Ceylon there was more wind and motion, and one day the decks were flooded by a tropical burst of rain.

The daily routine was once broken by a funeral. A baby died early in the morning, and a coffin was got ready at once; in these latitudes there must be no delay in disposing of the dead. One of the gangways was thrown open and draped with a red ensign. Deck benches were placed for the congregation, and the coffin was carried in a flag by officers of the ship. Some of the crew attended in their best uniform; the engines were slowed down, and the burial service having been read by one of the passengers—a missionary—the coffin was dropped over the side. The ceremony was simple and impressive, and the bright sky and blue sea took away at least the outward appearance of gloom. The service over, crew and passengers resumed their several occupations, the engines again started full speed ahead, and all went on as usual. The incident cast but a fleeting shadow over the ship's life, but the mother's heart must have yearned for the little one in its tiny coffin, lying cold and still beneath the tropic sea.

While the *Nubia* is ploughing her way across the Indian Ocean, it may interest some to have an idea of the daily life on board one of these modern Indiamen. East of Suez, sleeping on deck is much the fashion, and certainly pleasanter than simmering in the hot cabins below. Some ladies even do it, a space being enclosed with deck-benches, and a

“ladies’ compartment” thus contrived. Old stagers try for places on skylights or in other raised positions, to escape disturbance at an unearthly hour for washing decks. For those who have not been so fortunate, it is trying to the temper to be roused from a sound sleep at the most deliciously cool time of the morning by a dusky seaman, who, squatting down, paws you at intervals, and drawls out: “Sahib, warsh deck! Sahib, WARSH DECK!!!” Nothing for it but to get up at once: a gang of Lascars is already at work, some scattering sand over the decks, others dashing buckets of water about, while another directs the nozzle of the fire-hose which sprawls over the deck like a huge serpent, gasping as the water gushes through at each stroke of the steam-pump, while tiny jets spurt out at the joints. Others, again, are holystoning the decks, and all are chattering; and what with the fizz and clatter of the donkey engine, the splashing of water, scrubbing of boards, and the Babel of voices, there is noise enough to banish sleep, even if you had not been turned out of your snug corner. So, making the best of a bad job, you bundle up your bedding and make for the main or lower deck, deriving small comfort from the fact that the lighted clock in the saloon companion indicates the hour of 4.30. Here too all is up in arms, and deck-washing has commenced in earnest. Lamps are burning, and your progress is much impeded by Lascars squatting about—the favourite native attitude, for the perfect attainment of which it seems necessary to have no backbone. The decks are peppered with sand and deluged with water, and vigorously scrubbed by the squatters. Each gang has its allotted space to clean, and the stewards, down on their knees, in the same piecemeal way scrub the saloon. Others are at work polishing the brasses, lamp-fittings, balustrades of the companion stairs, or other furniture—all have their appointed tasks. Through this busy throng you pick your way along the narrow passages between decks to your cabin, where you deposit your bedding, and consider whether to turn in for another hour’s sleep. But it is hot and stuffy below, and you probably prefer to return on deck, get hold of an empty chair, and wait for daylight. As the sky brightens, more early birds make their appearance, the occupants of skylights and other points of vantage are roused out, and everybody wakes up. The washing has come to an end, though the decks are not yet dry, and for an hour or so the gentlemen have

undisturbed possession, the ladies who slept on deck having gone below as soon as the scrubbing began. Wonderful are the toilets at this hour of the day. Ease before elegance is the rule, and there is a charming variety of undress—sleeping jackets and pyjamas, dressing gowns, overcoats, capes, pea-jackets and trousers, with a fine selection of bare legs and feet. Some sit over their early tea and coffee, and then enjoy the first and most fragrant pipe or cigar of the day. Others pair off for a vigorous walk up and down the deck, and go as if their lives depended on doing so many “laps” before breakfast. Others subside into chairs, and read a novel, or newspaper picked up at the last port of call. Then comes the morning bath. There are bath-rooms on the main deck, but in a full ship there is a great run upon these, and as breakfast time draws near, the number of candidates increases, till there is a regular string of people, armed with sponge, soap and towels, waiting in the passage, and if any bather exceeds the regulation ten minutes (regarding which there are printed notices in the bath-rooms) an impatient rattle at the handle from outside reminds him of the flight of time. On board the *Nubia* was an arrangement that I do not remember to have seen in any other ship. A big tub was placed on deck amidships, and by a screen of canvas concealed as in a tent. Into this a fire-hose was directed, and the steam-pump filled it in no time. Bathers entered the pavilion in order of their arrival, and when one came out another went in. The tub was brimming full and the pump kept going all the time, so the water was constantly changing. An *al fresco* bath in the cool morning air with the blue sky overhead was very refreshing; but the contrast on diving into a stuffy cabin to dress was disagreeable.

Bathing over and toilets completed, the passengers gradually assemble on deck, the ladies in every variety of light and airy costume, eagerly awaiting the summons to the first “square meal” of the day. The second bell sounds at last (the first rings half-an-hour earlier), and all descend to the saloon, where, as soon as the tables are occupied, little time is lost in getting to work. A P. and O. breakfast is a liberal and substantial meal, calculated to still the cravings even of appetites sharpened by sea-air. The *menu* comprises porridge (if this is meant to take the edge off, it does not seem to have much effect), chops, steaks, fish, curry and rice, bacon, ham, eggs, and other viands—excellent fare,

barring the tea which is generally bad, and the coffee, which is worse. Waiting is done by the stewards, one man being told off to look after every four or five passengers, and for some time they are kept hard at it. Breakfast over, the company gradually disperse and go on deck, where time is killed in various ways—smoking, reading, lounging, knitting, netting, crochet or other needle-work, flavoured with small talk, according to sex and taste. Meanwhile the stewards are not idle. They get their own breakfasts sitting or standing about in the pantry, off the relics of the saloon table—very good victuals, but taken rather hurriedly. Then after washing up they have to sweep the cabins, make the beds and put things straight for inspection at 11 o'clock by the captain, who goes round with one or two of his officers to see that all is in order, and hear any complaints that passengers may have to make. People who have writing to do generally frequent the saloon between meals, and whist parties are sometimes made up. Lunch on the *Nubia* was at 12—a less luxurious feast than is now given at 1 o'clock. We dined at 4, and had tea at 7. This too is now altered, the custom of “four o'clock tea” having spread to the P. and O., and dinner being relegated to the more fashionable hour of half-past 6 or 7. Children's meals are earlier, and second-class passengers of course mess separately; so with feeding of one sort or another going on at short intervals, the stewards are kept pretty busy. In a full ship the work is very hard, and a good steward or stewardess well earns any *douceur* that may be forthcoming at the end of the voyage; for though fees are included in the passage-money, the practice of giving “tips” is not out of date. The interval between lunch and dinner, being the hottest part of the day, is generally a sleepy time. Full feeding and want of exercise, combined with the strong sea-air and sultry atmosphere, have a drowsy effect; and a correct picture of a P. and O. steamer's deck on a sunshiny afternoon in the Arabian Sea would show many varieties of slumbering attitudes, not all graceful. Towards evening as the sun sinks and the air becomes cooler, people rouse up. Our athletics on the *Nubia* have been already mentioned. Ladies, and the more phlegmatic males, are content with less violent exercise; but in one way or another constitutionals are taken before dinner.

There is no rule about dressing: gentlemen seldom do it, and swallow-

tails and white ties are quite the exception. But the ladies make up for any want of style in the other sex, and some of them indulge in most killing toilettes. The seats of honour are filled by the captain, doctor, purser, and such other officers as are off duty, all very correctly got up in the neat P. and O. uniform. On the *Ripon* and *Nubia* the soup and joints were put on table and helped by the passengers who sat opposite. As soon as the purser gave the signal these were mobbed by a crowd of stewards armed with plates, who, descending like vultures on the unhappy victims, desisted not till their wants were satisfied or the dishes empty. Things are managed differently now: dinner is served *à la Russe*, and all carving, &c., is done off the table. Formerly, all liquors were found by the company and charged in the passage-money—now orders are given on cards on which passengers write name, date, and number of berth; these are sent in for payment, accounts being made up by the barman, in weekly bundles. The quality is good; and the present system, under which people pay just for what they have, is a great improvement on the old. The *Ripon* and *Nubia* carried quantities of live stock: the new ships carry very little, having enormous stowage capacity for frozen meat in their refrigerating chambers. Some people who like fresh-killed meat prefer the old style. The bill of fare is varied and good, and *menu* cards bristling with French names are placed at intervals along the table. Everything is done by signal: after each course the stewards go off to the pantry for the next; and as soon as all are supplied with fresh dishes a call-bell sounds and they troop into the saloon, stand each in his place behind the seats and wait for a second signal, at which they hand the dishes. This methodical plan saves confusion; the stewards are well drilled, and little time is lost. Some are smarter than others; and I remember admiring a time-saving device of our table-steward on board the *Nubia*. Cheese and biscuits were handed after the sweets; but few took any. The steward glided rapidly along, bending over and observing solemnly to each of his charges: “Cheesir!” His course was usually uninterrupted, and his progress marked by repetition of the word, beginning low, swelling to a full tone as he came nearer, and dying away in the distance as he shot off for the pantry—Cheesir! Cheesir!! CHEESIR!!! CHEESIR!!!! CHEESIR!!! Cheesir!! Chees—— My next neighbour at last, out of pure malice I believe, made a point of

stopping him in mid-career and helping himself, which of course spoilt the timing of the performance.

During meals, and at other times when there are many people in the saloon, the punkahs are kept swinging, as it is very hot. These are long heavy poles of wood polished, with brown holland falls, stiffened with some material inside. The ceiling being low, it is well to look out and dodge the punkah when taking or leaving your seat at table. The punkah-wallahs, little native boys in clean white frocks, caps of plaited grass with red pugrees twisted round and gaudy silk handkerchiefs tied round the waist—miniature Lascars—squat behind the seats and pull the ropes which pass over little brass wheels fixed above to the punkahs. Sometimes the ropes are carried through the upper deck and pulled from above. Punkah pulling in hot weather is drowsy work, and sometimes a little fellow begins to nod, the swing diminishing as the nods increase, till it stops altogether. Suddenly rousing he gives one or two vigorous pulls, but this does not last. Again the swing becomes less and less, and the punkah hangs quiescent till some irate passenger sings out: "*Punkah khaincho!*" (pull) when the sleeper is admonished by the nearest steward, or if he is on deck, a sudden tug at the rope reminds him of his duty.

Dessert over, people drop off gradually and go on deck to enjoy the fresh air. There is not much lingering round the board, nor opportunity for conversation "across the walnuts and the wine." The tables are quickly cleared, and the stewards dine as they breakfast, off the remains of the feast.

After this, the staff have comparative rest. Dinner is the event of the day, and when this is done, nothing important remains on the programme. Tea, whether after dinner as formerly or at four o'clock as now, is a movable feast, and may be had on the deck or in the saloon, according to taste. So also with the final drink before turning in for the night, of which there is less now than there used to be, for steamers have bars, much frequented by thirsty souls during the day. Cards, music, sometimes dancing or theatricals, are the evening amusements till 10 o'clock, when "lights out" is the rule. The ship is not, of course, left in darkness, lanterns being kept burning all night at certain points in the saloon and 'tween decks. Passengers with young

children, or who on any pretext can get an order from the ship's doctor, are allowed lights all night in their cabins. But changes have come in with electric lighting.

The last act of the day for those who sleep on deck is to go below, don sleeping suits, and carry their bedding up or get the stewards to help them, when the darkened deck is soon transformed from a crowded lounge into a dormitory covered with mattresses and pillows, occupied by recumbent forms. Gradually these drop off to sleep—silence reigns—and soon the only signs of life are the figures of officers and men on watch. Covered by double awnings, the deck resembles a huge tent, and forms a spacious and airy bed-room. Above, the funnels, spars, and rigging stand out in black relief against the starry sky, the tall masts swaying gently with the motion of the ship; but all is still aloft unless for the flapping of a sail that now swells to the light breeze and now hangs idly from the yard. At intervals the bell rings out the hours of the night, and occasionally a hoarse voice is heard calling the watch. But the engine-room is full of life and motion. Here the lamps burn brightly, the restless piston-rods are glancing up and down, and the regular beat of the engines, like monotonous dance-music, mingles with the throb of the propeller and the gurgle and swish of the water as it seems to rush along the vessel's sides into the boiling whirlpool under the stern. Below, too, all settle down for the night; those who eschew the deck turn into their comfortable cots; while the stewards lie about in the saloons and passages, taking their night's rest as their meals, in a casual though not comfortless fashion. Thus the good ship holds her course through the silent night, while her passengers, trusting to the skill and vigilance of those in charge, sleep quietly till morning.

We fell in with two native craft in want of assistance. One, a crazy-looking boat deeply laden and full of men, bound from one of the Maldives to Point de Galle, was short of water and provisions. The other, a small barque, had lost the captain and another man from cholera. This vessel we took in tow and brought safely to Galle.

After the sandy plains of Egypt, the barren rocks of Aden, and the long monotony of the Arabian Sea, the tropical luxuriance of Ceylon was very refreshing. From a distance even the land looked inviting; and as we slowly steamed into Galle harbour through the intricate and rather

dangerous channel, its beauties were seen more in detail,—rocky promontories, topped with green turf; quaint old Dutch fortifications and white houses half hidden by luxuriant vegetation; the sandy beach clothed with trees to the very water's edge. Cocoa-nut palms grow in great profusion, their drooping feathery fronds, and stems inclined at different angles, or twisting in snake-like curves, forming a dense wall of verdure along the margin of the sea.

As soon as the anchor was down, the *Nubia* became the centre of a regular fleet of shore-boats; and here for the first time appeared those queer outrigger craft that are peculiar to the island. A very narrow canoe, something like a compressed trough with pointed ends, is kept upright on the water by a timber float, fixed parallel to the boat at the end of two curved poles. Propelled by paddles, or under sail, these boats go at a good pace, and are used by fishermen, as well as for carrying passengers, who have to sit close in the stern, with scant room for their legs. Crank as they look, they are safe enough, and cannot upset while the outrigger holds together.

Two other P. and O. steamers were in port—the *Bombay* for Australia, and the *Malta* for China. Ours had to take in coal and cargo, and would not leave till next day, so most of the passengers went ashore. We patronised the “New Mansion House” Hotel, and admired the large airy rooms, with punkahs slung to the ceiling, capacious doors, innocent of bolts and bars, and plan of the houses generally, which seemed designed to admit air rather than keep out intruders. As it grew dusk, tiny brilliant atoms, twinkling like stars, were seen floating in the air. They looked like sparks from a chimney, but it soon occurred to us that they must be fire-flies, common enough in the East. A swarm of these little insects hovering about a tree or bush at nightfall, spangling the dark foliage with dancing points of greenish-yellow light, is a sight not to be forgotten.

In the morning we bathed off the rocks, disturbing a lot of little red crabs that dodged among the holes and crevices, and scuttled off at a great rate; the water was rather tepid, and it was hot work dressing, especially struggling into one's boots. Returning to the hotel we chartered a vehicle, and started for the Wak Walla Bungalow, one of the sights of the place. The streets were thronged with natives, in the cool



and airy Cinghalese dress, mostly bare-headed, the black glossy hair (well oiled) drawn back and kept off the face by a semi-circular comb of tortoise-shell. With this feminine coiffure, and their hairless faces, it is often difficult to tell men from women. Some wear conical caps of plaited grass, prettily worked in colours. The body garment is a calico jacket, below which is a waistcloth or petticoat, covering the person from waist to below the knee. Those who affect style carry umbrellas, often of the Chinese or Japanese pattern. Some of the children, plump little creatures with olive brown skins and black eyes, are decidedly pretty. Beside the road were mat huts, nestling in masses of luxuriant foliage: towards the open country these became fewer, giving place to groves of cocoa-palms and paddy-fields intersected by little banks of earth, the green rice springing in soil that was literally swimming with water. Of animals there were cats and paria dogs,—short-haired curs with long foxy noses and curly tails, solemn crows, and the pretty little zebras or humped cattle, yoked to carts and carriages, that went trotting along at a smart pace. It was a lively scene and rich in colour, the effect of which was heightened by the brilliant atmosphere.

The Wak Walla Bungalow stood high, with a fine view over the low country,—a river running through rice-fields, a forest of cocoa-palms beyond, and lofty mountains in the background. Many “Nubians” had come like ourselves to admire the prospect: these were marked as fair game by native dealers in jewellery; and great haggling went on with the dusky merchants, whose stock comprised carbuncles, Ceylon rubies, opals, cats’ eyes, ornaments of tortoise-shell-toe, &c. Good stones are to be had in the island, but it is necessary to be careful—a good deal of “Ceylon jewellery” comes from Birmingham.

After a pleasant day on shore we returned to the ship, and towards evening, her decks black with coal-dust and hampered with the luggage of several new passengers, the old *Nubia* left the harbour, exchanging a broadside of cheers with the crew of the *Malta*, which steamed out just ahead.

At Madras (about three days beyond Galle) many passengers landed; and with a reduced ship’s company we sailed from our last port of

call. The voyage had lasted not quite six weeks, and to me at least had not seemed long. Early on Saturday morning (Nov. 29th) the ship was stopped for soundings with the deep-sea lead. It was gloriously fine, the sea calm as a lake. The colour of the water, however, was gradually changing from the intense blue of the deep sea to a greenish and less transparent tint, which gradually became more and more opaque and brown till it lost all beauty and became simply muddy,—a sure sign that we were nearing the mouth of a large and turbid river. Other vessels came in sight, bound the same way as ourselves, among them a fine Indiaman, the *Shannon*, one of Green's ships on her first voyage, in tow of a tug. Presently we passed a light-ship and came upon two pilot-brigs, from one of which our pilot came on board. The Hooghly pilots are in Government service, and discharge important and responsible duties. They serve a long apprenticeship in the junior grades, beginning as leadsmen, and gradually rising to the rank of Branch and Master Pilot. The shoals and sandbanks in the Hooghly are constantly shifting, and the river bed has to be surveyed at frequent intervals;—the current is very rapid, and a vessel once driven fairly on to a shallow has small chance of escape, so a pilot need have all his wits about him. The life of these men must be a hard one, intervals of active duty being spent in pilot-brigs at the Sandheads, where the weather is often very bad. No land is visible at the Sandheads, a point in the Bay of Bengal where the embouchure of the Hooghly is supposed to terminate and the open sea to begin. The leave of officers starting from Calcutta commences from the day on which the pilot is dropped. As soon as the pilot is on board he takes charge of the ship, the captain's business then being to see that his orders are carried out.

The land first sighted was bare and sandy, but as we got into the river and arrived off Sangor, the sloping mud-banks were seen to be topped with low jungle, higher trees rising here and there, the greenness of which was pleasant after a long spell of nothing but sea and sky. We anchored for the night at Diamond Harbour, where two custom-house officers came on board to examine luggage that passengers might wish to take on shore, all other things with heavy goods having to pass through the custom house.

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ON THE HOCHLY
10-13-95

Next morning we proceeded early on our way, passing numerous native boats—queer-looking craft, high astern and low in front, quite contrary to European ideas, with patched and ragged sails¹ of almost any colour but white, and rigging to correspond—outlandish in appearance altogether. Our course up the river was very erratic, the *Nubia* now hugging one bank and now the other, zig-zagging along in a wonderful way, to avoid the banks and shallows which abound in this dangerous river. One of the worst places is the shoal known as the “James and Mary,”² where another large river, the Rupnaráyan, falls into the Hooghly on the right bank, and cross currents and eddies at some states of the tide are very violent.

Garden Reach was rather disappointing. This once favourite suburb has been ruined by the advent of the ex-King of Oude, interned here in a range of villas fronting the river, with the usual retinue and army of loafers, male and female, that infest the palace of an Eastern monarch. Steaming up to the P. & O. moorings, we passed the *Candia* of the same company lying at anchor, and the *Erymanthe*, pioneer ship of the Messageries Impériales. The arrival of the English steamer being rather an event, a number of Calcutta people had come down to the wharf, and several boarded the ship, among others a civilian of the previous year—friend of a college chum of mine on board, with whom I had arranged to hunt for quarters on arrival—who knowing something of Calcutta kindly offered to help us. The *Nubia* not being yet alongside, we went ashore in a native row-boat or *dinghee*, of the regulation cock-up-stern-and-down-in-the-bows design, with a small cabin astern. The mode of settling with the *dinghee-wallahs* strikes a new-comer as simple and expeditious. The passenger pays what he thinks fair, and if the men grumble, shows his stick, or even lays it on, when they at once become cheerful and contented. Similar treatment of a London cabby might have different results.

Yardley's friend and his wife had rooms in a boarding-house at Chowringhee, the fashionable quarter of Calcutta, kept by an Eurasian

¹ The *manjhi* (captain) of a boat with *very* ragged sail is sometimes chaffed with the advice to “sell his boat and get a new sail.”

² Possibly a corruption of some native name.

lady, *i.e.*, of mixed European and native descent. The city being badly off for hotels, boarding houses were much frequented by people without homes of their own, and Mrs. Box's establishment had a good name both for food and lodging. Finding that she could take us in, Yardley and I established ourselves for the present under her roof, and felt that life in India had really begun.

CHAPTER II.

LIFE IN CALCUTTA.—1862-3.

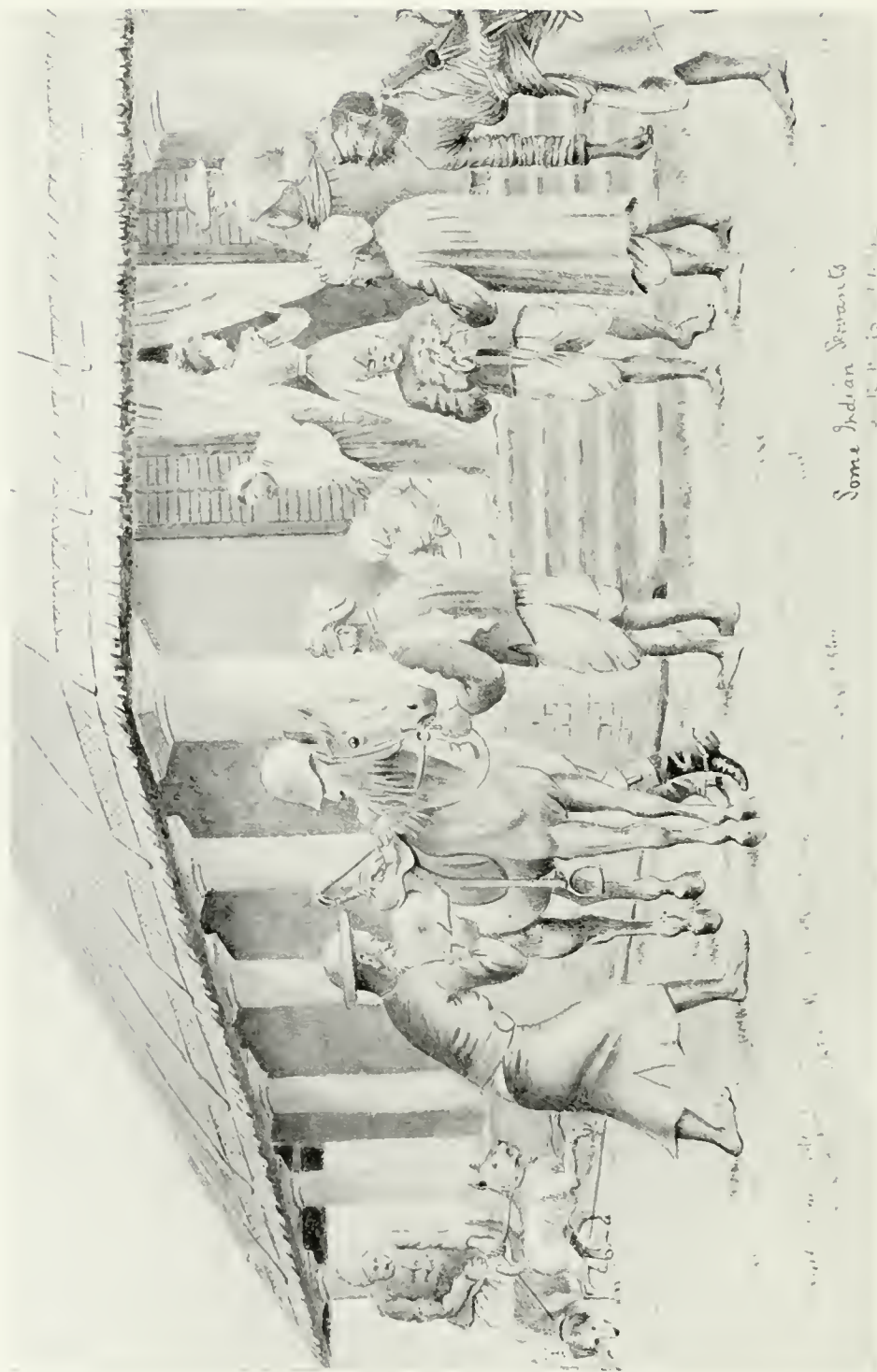
CHOWRINGHEE is a wide thoroughfare open to and skirting the Maidan on the east, and runs north and south nearly parallel to the Hooghly. The Maidan is the feature of Calcutta : a wide grassy plain dotted with trees and varied with tanks or ponds, intersected by wide roads with soft *made* rides and shady avenues,—its vast area embracing the Race Course, Fort William (a small town in itself), the Eden Gardens, Cathedral and Presidency Jail,—it stretches north and south from Government House to Tolly's Nullah,¹ and east and west from Chowringhee to the river. It affords pasture to cattle, parade and camping grounds for troops, fields for any number of cricket, football, golf and polo matches, and fresh air to the community in general. It is the great lung of Calcutta, and especially of an evening is thronged by Europeans trooping out on horse and foot, and in all sorts of conveyances, from the lordly barouche to the humble “*tieca gari*,”—old and young, children with ayahs, even English dogs with their native attendants,—all coming forth to breathe after the day's long confinement. Most are bound for the Course, a broad promenade and carriage drive along the river-bank, where the fashionables drive up and down, and then adjourn to the Eden Gardens where the band plays. During the day, in the hot months especially, the Maidan is less frequented except by natives. European ladies stay indoors with darkened rooms and swinging punkahs, and few white faces are seen but those of business men bound to or from the “city” north of the Maidan, and people paying calls or shopping.

¹ The old Mahratta Ditch, dug in former days as a protection against those notorious freebooters. Hence Calcutta people are sometimes called “Ditchers.”

Chowringhee may be compared to Piccadilly east of Park Lane ; but the view across the broad street is different. Instead of the Green Park with grassy slopes and branching trees, and a background of house-tops towards St. James's and Belgravia, there is the wide level stretch of the Maidan, beyond which appear the green ramparts and barracks of Fort William, and the masts of shipping in the Hooghly. Here are the Bengal and United Service Clubs, the former occupying a house once tenanted by Macaulay ; the Cathedral and Bishop's Palace ; Indian Museum ; and some of the best boarding and private houses, others being situated in the neighbouring streets of this Eastern West End.

Many of these are very large, with three or more storeys, imposing portico entrances and deep verandahs with fixed wooden jalousies. There being no stone near Calcutta most houses are of brick, stuccoed and whitewashed, and with their green venetians look well as long as the colours are fresh, but soon get weather-stained and dingy when the rains set in. Calcutta houses of the better sort stand in their own grounds or "compounds," walled enclosures laid out, allowing for differences of locality, like English gardens. At the main gate a *darwān* or doorkeeper is stationed in a little house or lodge, whose duties resemble those of a hall-porter. When the lady of a house does not wish to receive callers, half the gate is shut, indicating *darwāza bund* (the door is closed), a statement often more honest than "not at home," and quite as effectual. Within the enclosure are the stables, coach-house and other out-buildings comprising kitchen and servants' quarters. As a rule, the kitchen is separate from the dwelling house : plates and dishes are washed up in the *bottle-khana*, which may be only a part of the verandah set apart for this purpose, and adjoins the dining-room :—here too odd culinary jobs are done, such as making toast, boiling the tea-kettle, eggs, &c., but the regular business of cooking is carried on under a separate roof.

The number of servants in an Indian house seems very large to those accustomed to European establishments. The reason is, that each has his own particular duty to perform, and would not think of doing anything else. Servants of all work are not known in Bengal. A Madrāsī servant or Bombay "boy" will turn his hand to most things, but Bengali Hindoos are great sticklers for caste, while the Mahomedans find it convenient so far to imitate them as to object to a distasteful task on the ground that



Some Indian Servants

its performance would affect their *izzat* (reputation) in some mysterious way. At the head of all is the bearer or body-servant. In a large establishment there will be a sirdar or head-bearer, with one or more “mates” or assistants under him. The bearer, usually a Hindoo, is his master’s valet, and looks after the other servants, except those of the table and kitchen department. He keeps accounts, disburses petty cash, and sometimes has charge of his master’s ready money; but this generally when there is no lady in the house. Next in importance comes the *khansamah*, or butler, sometimes called “consumer” for reasons which will be understood by many a would-be economical housewife. His duty is to do the marketing (“bazar” as it is called in India), take orders for meals, and generally act as caterer;—also wait or superintend the waiting at table. A good *khansamah* is invaluable where much company is kept, and the master or mistress of the house does not care to look into details—but he is emphatically an expensive luxury. The *khitmatgar* is a table-servant, who works under the *khansamah*, or himself fills that place, where no separate butler is kept. The *masálchi* washes up plates, &c., and assists the *khitmatgar*—also works in the kitchen. He is often a very good cook.

The cook does not usually appear in the house, though sometimes he does the catering, in which case there is no *khansamah*. A good cook commands high wages, especially in the Presidency towns and large stations up-country. Most are Mahomedans, as are the table-servants also. No orthodox Hindoo would have anything to do with Europeans’ food. Some of the best cooks are Rajbunsi Mughls, from Chittagong, a cross between the Eastern Bengali and the Burman of Arracan, who often ask, and get, Rs.20 and Rs.30 per month. An ordinary cook may be had for Rs.10 or Rs.12. Besides these there is the *mehtar* or sweeper, who sweeps the house, tends the dogs if any, and generally does the dirty work; and the *bheestie* or water-carrier, who fills the bath-room tubs, and supplies water wherever required, even to the *syces* in the stable. These last have *grass-cutters* under them—one to each horse. Their name denotes their occupation; but besides bringing forage for their animals (it is quite the exception to get hay in Bengal) they help to groom them, and keep harness and saddlery in order. As the *masálchi* is often a good cook, so the grass-cutter is often a good syce. In each case the sub-

ordinate is serving his apprenticeship, and hopes one day to qualify for the higher service.

The *dhobi*, or washerman, may or may not belong to the establishment. Sometimes he lives in the compound, and washes (or is supposed to wash) for the one house only. This is often the case up-country; but in Calcutta and large places he works for several people, and takes the wash away as in England. A *dirzi*, or tailor, is almost always one of the servants, and sits and works in the verandah. When there is much work, extra men are employed by the job (*ticca*). They are clever at copying from patterns, but not so good at making things fit to measure. Where there are ladies and children, *ayahs*, who are both ladies' maids and nurses, form part of the establishment, which also includes one or more *mālis*¹ (gardeners) if there is a garden. *Chuprāssis* or orderly peons will be mentioned later on.

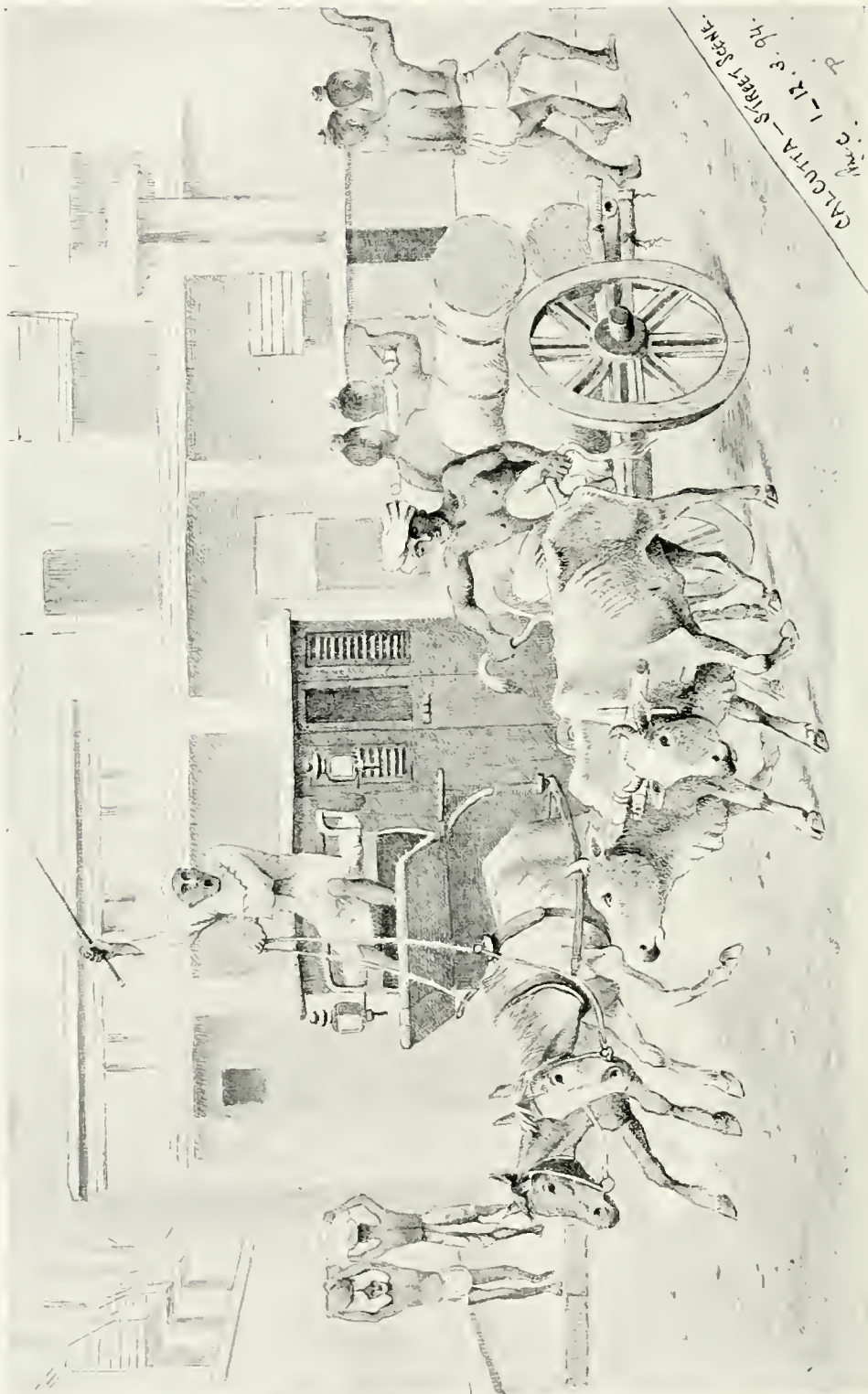
Regular mansions are some of the Calcutta houses as regards size, but with no pretensions to architectural beauty, which it would be hard to find in a square flat-roofed house. Besides the venetians, fixed or folding, doors and windows are fitted with glazed shutters, but these are usually kept open, except in rain or dust-storms, or great heat. Handsome plate-glass windows, except for shop fronts, are unknown.

Mr. M., the good Samaritan who brought us from the ship, had supplied my friend Yardley with a bearer and khitmatgar, and also found a table-servant for me. Next day a bearer appeared as a candidate for service, saying he was a *bhai* (brother) of Y.'s servant. The native word *bhai* includes cousins to a remote degree, and is also applied to caste-fellows, so the relationship if not fictitious was probably remote. Bearers and other servants often have hangers-on whom they call *bhai*, and make it their business to provide with situations as occasion may offer. The Hindoo family system is a regular mutual benefit society, and the prosperous members are expected to help those who are not so well off. It is a kindly custom, but liable to abuse. Being now in a boarding-house, Y. and I only required a bearer and kit (short for khitmatgar) apiece, other servants being kept by the landlady.

One of our first excursions was to the custom house, to release our

¹ It is said that if you want flowers but have no garden, you should keep a *mali*, which does just as well.

Fig. 1-12. 8. 94.
CALCUTTA—STREET SCENE.



heavy baggage, which had been landed from the ship; so we sent for a *ticca gari*, or hackney carriage, and made a start. The average Calcutta *ticca* is not an elegant conveyance, something like a box on wheels, with hinged or sliding doors, and venetians instead of glass windows, which are meant to pull up and down, but are sometimes too groggy to be safely meddled with. The roof is double on account of the sun—the inside lined with some kind of stuff or glazed American cloth, more or less dirty and torn; the outside was probably painted *once*, but hasn't been done since. The wheels revolve in "waggly" fashion, suggestive of well-worn axle-boxes; there is free ventilation through cracks and ill-fitting joins; and the whole turn-out looks woefully shabby. The animals are worthy of the conveyance—wretched *tattoos* (ponies) with staring coats, ragged manes and tails, their bones almost through the skin, and withers and backs often badly galled. A wisp of withered grass for fodder is usually stuck under the coach-box. The harness may be called an arrangement of leather and string, with rusty bits and dirty buckles. Better *garis* are to be had, but the above is no unfair description of a "second-class *ticca*," a conveyance much used by the poorer Europeans, Eurasians and natives, who pack close from motives of economy. The driver is generally a Mahomedan, often a mere lad, with dirty turban or skull-cap, and other garments to match.

Into one of these we got; but the driver knowing no English and we but little Hindustani, converse was difficult; and we found ourselves first landed at the Civil Pay Master's office. We did not then know that "Permit ghur" (the house of permits or passes) is the native name for custom house, but were put right and eventually reached the place, where our goods were handed over on paying the duty, 10 per cent. on value of new saddlery, guns, &c., which seemed pretty stiff.

Starting our belongings off by bullock cart and coolies in charge of the bearer, we proceeded to Hunter and Co.'s livery stables in quest of a buggy to be hired by the month. Europeans don't walk much in India: we did not care to waste our substance on frequent *ticcas*, which also seemed beneath the dignity of budding civilians, so we determined to have a buggy. Hunter's and Cook's were then the best-known stables in Calcutta, and both were in Dhurumtollah, a street running to the Maidan at its north-east corner,—a rather shabby and decidedly

“horsey” neighbourhood. Here, too, was the repository of Esan bin Curtas, a well-known Arab dealer. Rather different from similar establishments in London,—rough editions of Tattersall’s and Aldridge’s. The arrangement of most of these places is much the same—a spacious entrance from the street with wide gates and plenty of room for driving in or out with animals new to harness. Within, a lofty covered space like a riding school, rows of stalls on each side and a broad tan-covered ride down the middle, where horses are trotted out on auction days, and where intending purchasers (not at auction) can try the paces of any animal :—jumping bars are also there ready to put up, in case its leaping powers are to be tested. On one side of the ride is the auctioneer’s rostrum, and benches for the public convenience are placed at intervals. In rear of the covered space is a yard with exits into side-streets and back shums, and ranges of stabling extend in different directions from the central building.

Morning is a busy time in Dhurumtollah. Troops of horses are taken for early exercise to the Maidan—Arabs of all sorts with flowing mane and tail, many with the very slightest strain of real desert blood; country-breds, some very serviceable but not showy; stud-breds reared in the Government breeding establishments (since abolished) and “cast” for some reason as not being up to army standard; and raw-boned fiddle-headed Walers.¹ Handsome well-bred animals are certainly to be seen in Calcutta; a high-caste Arab is an ideal mount, especially for a lady, and a thoroughbred Waler is not easily distinguishable from a good English horse. But for one really good-looking beast you may see a dozen ugly ones;—many so-called Arabs never saw the land of Arabia but hail from Persia, the Gulf, or Cabul; while even the better sort of Walers on first landing from the ship are in such poor condition that it takes an experienced eye to discover their good points. A man who can trust his own judgment, however, may pick up something worth having among these new arrivals, whose defects are at least not concealed or minimised by sleek bodies, glossy coats, and general trimness of get-up.

Strings of these animals, hooded and blanketed, are led along the street; while here and there a raw Waler, with a colonial jockey or native rough rider in the deep Australian saddle with ample “buck-

¹ Horses imported from Australia (New South Wales).

jumping" knee-rolls, comes dancing by all on one side, tail swishing and head going like a pump-handle—one moment in the air, the next down between his knees, as he tears at the bit and half drags his rider's arms off in frantic efforts to get his head—and once on the Maidan starts at a plunging gallop across the grass, where fortunately there is plenty of room to take it out of him. This is a favourite training ground for horses in harness as well as saddle, and breaks belonging to different stables are often driven between Dhurumtollah and the Maidan, usually with an old stager alongside a "young one," whose kicks, plunges, and other antics are kept in some restraint by the dead weight of his more sober companion. Occasionally the syces in attendance have to jump down and run alongside a more than usually fractious animal that first won't start, and then goes off suddenly with a spasmodic rush rather disconcerting to the driver. With all this stable business going on, the foot-passengers sometimes have a lively time.

To return : we engaged a buggy at Hunter's at a monthly rate of Rs. 150, which then represented about £15. Cook's might have done it for Rs. 100, but we were told that there we should get only one horse for the whole day's work, on which terms the humane firm of Hunter's declined to do business. This was perhaps an invention, to prevent our patronising the other establishment; no doubt we were perceived to be "griffs," and treated accordingly. The Calcutta buggy is a luxurious conveyance, like a cabriolet but rather higher; easy running and well hung on cee springs; comfortably padded and cushioned; the hood affording shelter from sun or rain while admitting free ventilation. With a good horse, great pace may be got up. Buggies seem going rather out of fashion now, dog-carts and similar traps being more in favour. Hansom cabs are not unknown in Calcutta, but are uncommon.

My friend Y. had acquaintances among the last year's civilians, some of whom had established themselves in two "chummeries" at Dum Dum, a military station about eight miles from Calcutta, formerly headquarters of the Bengal Artillery. A chummary is an establishment of two or more bachelors or "grass-widowers,"¹ who club together to keep

¹ Married men living *en garçon* for the time; their wives being away, at home or in the Hills.

house. One of the chums acts as housekeeper,—checks monthly bills, pays the servants, and superintends generally; and a well-ordered chum-mery may be very pleasant, as will be seen later on.

One of the first things to be done by a new arrival is to present his letters of introduction (vulgarly called “tickets for soup”) if he has any. So having extracted mine from one of my boxes I had a palki called and started on a round of visits.

The Calcutta palanquin or *palki* is convenient when a more pretentious vehicle is not wanted. The bearers are Uriyas (natives of Orissa), a class which also furnishes a large number of valet-bearers. They are not very muscular in appearance, but tough and wiry, and in good condition from constant exercise. Their pace is a kind of jog-trot, so regulated that the step is *out of time*. Were all to keep step, the palki would swing most disagreeably; by “breaking the step” as it is called, smoothness of motion is secured as far as possible. Getting in and out of a palki requires practice, to avoid hitting your head against the top, or pitching out on the off-side as the thing oscillates if not held by the men. The bearers mark the step with a curious sing-song chorus, one of the men starting a sort of improvised recitative—sometimes enlarging on the weight of the passenger, obstacles in the road, &c.—while the others keep up a grunting accompaniment, which seems to help them wonderfully.

My round of calls included Mr. (afterwards Sir Cecil) Beadon, the Lieut. Governor of Bengal, whose official residence is “Belvedere” in Alipore, a suburb of Calcutta—a fine white mansion in charming grounds with well-kept lawns and shrubberies and some magnificent trees. The Private Secretary was very polite: I wrote my name in the visitors’ book, and was invited to a public breakfast a day or two after. Another duty call was paid to Captain Lees in Elysium Row, Secretary to the Board of Examiners, to whom all new civilians had to report themselves. The breakfast at Belvedere came off in due course, the guests assembling in a fine room divided by columns and heavy gold-coloured curtains,—one part being for reception, while in the other the breakfast was laid out. There were only one or two ladies, these breakfasts being semi-official affairs, for people to whom the Lieut.-Governor wished to pay some little attention, or talk on

business in an informal way. Mr. Beadon went round shaking hands and talking to everybody, and after a little the curtains were drawn back and all went in to breakfast—a very good one, the khitmatgars well-drilled and attentive. When asked out to private houses people take their own table-servants, without whom they may fare badly, as each man looks after his master and no one else; but at Government House and Belvedere the guests are waited on by servants of the house.

Shortly after this, Yardley and I migrated to another boarding-house near Chowringhee. Moving in Calcutta is a simple business for bachelors. The bearer having packed everything, calls a lot of coolies, who seize the lighter articles and trot off with them on their heads, while boxes and heavy goods are put on bullock carts. These carts are of simple construction; a framework of bamboos, wide at one end and tapering to a point at the other (like an elongated triangle), forms the body, and rests on a roughly dressed axle-tree: the narrower fore-part serves as the pole, and to it is attached a cross-bar or yoke, resting on the bullocks' necks in front of the hump characteristic of Indian cattle. The floor is of split bamboos laid lengthwise between the frame-poles in the wide part, and secured with cross battens. Sides as a rule there are none; but when the load requires such protection (*e.g.* lime, brick-dust, or other loose goods) bamboo side-rails and mats are added. The wheels are of the roughest, and squeal horribly. The driver squats or sits astride on the front or narrower part of the cart frame, sometimes perches on the load if the cart is very full, and urges his beasts by twisting their tails when they do not respond to the stick, or digging his toes into the more sensitive parts of their frame. A stick passing vertically through the yoke-bar on each side keeps the bullocks' necks in place: their nostrils are pierced, and strings running through serve as reins. The pace of Calcutta bullocks is usually a slow walk, though by assiduous tail-twisting they are occasionally persuaded to trot. Very different from the little Cinghalese oxen that trot gaily along like ponies. A row of these carts in a crowded thoroughfare is a great obstruction to swifter conveyances, which in case of collision are more likely to suffer than inflict damage. Of this the carters are well aware, and pursue their way serenely till

induced to move slowly aside by shouts from some approaching carriage. These frequent vociferations are among the features of Calcutta street life, and there is an etiquette about them too. Drivers of *ticea garis* and such humble vehicles do their own shouting, so also *palki* bearers. But for a European in his buggy or dog-cart, or native coachman driving a carriage and pair, to exert his lungs in order to clear the way, would be undignified; this is done by the *syces*, who squat or stand behind. In a crowded street the bawling is incessant: "*He, gariwalla, buggul jao!*"¹ Sometimes, if the *syces*' bellowing is not at once attended to, the master strikes in with stronger language, and salutes the offender with "*Soor ka butcha!*"² or other opprobrious epithet. Occasionally, when carts get into a hopeless tangle, the *syces* behind drop off and rush forward to clear the way. Like the Egyptian donkey-boys these men are generally lean and light-footed: a fat *syce* is quite the exception. With the roar and rattle of many vehicles, the cries of drivers and *syces*, and the everlasting grinding screech of the bullock-cart wheels, a busy street in Calcutta affords a great variety of sound.

Our new quarters were comfortable enough, though not luxuriously furnished. Coolness being the great object, rooms in Calcutta houses are large and lofty, with frequent openings fitted with doors and *venetians*. The whitewashed or roughly painted walls, and beams and rafters overhead not concealed by ceilings as in England, strike new comers as rather bare and unfinished looking; but the eye soon gets used to this. The floors of the best rooms, and in some houses the stairs, are covered with fine matting made of a sort of reed (*situl-patti*). Calcutta matting has a great reputation in Bengal. Furniture is mostly light, and lightly upholstered, and easy chairs and lounges are numerous. There are plenty of lamps, and candles in tall glass shades, and an Indian house looks its best when lighted up at night, as I noticed when visiting at Mr. K.'s, a Calcutta merchant to whom I had a letter of introduction. This gentleman had a country house at Barrackpore on the Hooghly, fourteen miles above Calcutta, a favourite resort of wealthy merchants and others having occupation in Calcutta, within easy reach of the capital by rail, while quite in the country. There were other guests, but all were accommodated without difficulty. The custom being for

¹ Hi, you carter, get to the side!

² Son of a pig!

people to take their own body-servants, the host has only to find rooms for his visitors and feed them. The number of servants, always large in an Indian house, is thus greatly increased where there is much entertaining; but natives can sleep anywhere, given a warm rug, and do not require beds and bedrooms as at home. Mr. K.'s was a fair sample of a Calcutta gentleman's country residence,—a white two-storeyed house with deep verandahs and portico and green painted sun-blinds; drawing, dining, and billiard rooms on the ground floor opening into each other, with a pretty view through the verandah of the Hooghly alive with native boats. A staircase from the billiard-room (which served as an entrance-hall) led to the bedrooms on the first floor. The compound was large and prettily laid out, and contained some fine trees and shrubs.

On the 8th December we had to attend a preliminary examination by the Board of Examiners. In those days civilians on first arrival were considered to be “in College,” and had to pass in two languages before being posted to stations up country. Examinations were held monthly, and certificates of progress issued on the result. Urdu (Hindustani) and Bengali were the languages for those appointed to the Lower Provinces; Persian and Hindi for the North-West, Oude or the Punjab. To young men just out from home, life in Calcutta was very pleasant, and few were in a hurry to leave it, so progress towards the passing standard was often slow. The examiners were not too severe, and credit was sometimes given for slender results. Failing to pass within a certain number of months, men might be sent to an up-country station to read there, and two civilians of the previous year (both of whom did very well in the service afterwards) were actually so sent, to Dacca. There was a tradition that any who persistently failed to pass were liable to be sent back to England as hopelessly bad bargains; but I never knew of a case. Now, preliminary examining is got through at home, and new civilians are posted on arrival. This certainly removes or minimises the temptation to get into debt at first, which at one time was much the fashion with young civilians.

The order of taking up the two languages being optional, I chose Hindustani as my first subject, and engaged a *moonshee* or native tutor,—a venerable gentleman in buff alpaca *chupkun* or coat like a tight dressing gown, long stockings, patent leather shoes and turban—a

mixture of eastern and western costume much affected by educated natives. Study was not very close at first. There was plenty to divert a new-comer, and afford excuses for idleness. One amusement was to watch the crows, which with kites are numerous in Calcutta. The Indian or hooded crow has a grey neck, not unlike a jackdaw, and is a comical bird—cunning, impudent, inquisitive and mischievous as a monkey. He struts about with an important air, cocking his head knowingly, and now and then uttering a solemn Caw! his tail going down as his beak opens,—always on the watch to steal,—a piece of toast from the early breakfast table in the verandah, scraps from the kitchen, or a tempting morsel from the clutches of a kite, from whose crooked beak however John Crow is careful to keep at a safe distance. Both kites and crows are clever at catching scraps thrown out of windows, and it is pretty to see the almost unerring precision with which the bits are intercepted,—the crows catching with their beaks, the kites with claws. There is also a larger kind of crow or raven—all black—but not so common. The mina (Indian starling) is another familiar object, and should be a happy bird, for the shooting of a mina stamps the marksman as a griff of the most verdant type. These birds, with vultures and the great adjutant storks,¹ assisted by jackals and paria dogs, make up a body of scavengers very useful in a place where, owing to the heat, carrion and refuse rapidly become offensive. What with open drains and rubbish thrown out of the houses, the Calcutta streets were neither clean nor sweet even in the European quarter, while the native town and bazars were worse. Things are better now; there is a regular system of drainage, and good water supply; but Calcutta is still a smelly place.

The Indian winter is the time for social gatherings and amusements. Calcutta is then full;—members of the Supreme Government descend from Olympus (Simla); the Union Jack floating over the dome of Government House denotes the presence of the Viceroy; balls, dinners, race-meetings, cricket and other matches succeed each other at short intervals, and society makes the most of its brief “cold weather” which lasts between three and four months, from November to March. The regular Calcutta season begins with the Viceroy’s arrival and ends with his departure.

¹ The adjutants, once numerous in Calcutta, have now for some reason (perhaps better conservancy) almost deserted the place, and are comparatively rare.

The dates vary with circumstances, but matters are generally so arranged that he reaches the capital before Christmas, and leaves before it becomes very hot. During his stay one or more levées are held by the Viceroy, and drawing-rooms by the Vicereine, to which everybody who is anybody is expected to go: indeed as regards Government officials stationed in Calcutta, absence on these occasions if unexplained would be a breach of etiquette.

My Christmas was not spent in Calcutta. Having got to India it was obviously the thing to go and look for a tiger. I did not, it is true, expect to find one on the *Maidán*, but the Sunderbuns were chosen as a likely spot, and near Calcutta. Stores for the trip were laid in, and included the following:—Map of the Twenty-Four Pergunnahs (district around Calcutta covering part of the Sunderbuns), pocket telescope, piece of waterproof sheeting, small hatchet, dark lantern, bottle of brandy, pocket-flask, and *one* tin of preserved meat and vegetables. Also a dark suit of dittoes, a silk cover to my sun-hat of the same colour, and a pair of brown leather butcher-boots. For weapons I had my rifle and revolver, parting gifts from friends at home.

My intended base of operations was Mutlah, terminus of the South-Eastern Bengal Railway, connecting Calcutta with the place and river of that name. The Mutlah River being reputed less dangerous than the Hooghly, there was a project for making this terminus (since called Port Canning) the port of Calcutta, and the railway was part of the scheme. The line was then under construction, and trains were running to Chapahati, about half-way to Mutlah, the whole distance being some thirty miles.

There was one other European in the train, and I was the only white passenger for Chapahati, the (native) station master at which place may have been rather astonished at my appearance in heavy marching order. Both hands being full, I presented my ticket between my teeth, greatly to the Baboo's disgust, who requested me to take it "out of my face." There was no waiting-room, the accommodation for travellers being limited to a bamboo hut with mud floor. I was prepared to rough it however, and slept pretty comfortably on a native cot or *charpoy*, a *chirāgh* (wick burning in a saucer of oil) serving as chamber candle.

Next morning the early train brought a party of Baboos (native

gentlemen) from Calcutta, who were going to visit a Government waste land grant¹ belonging to one of them in the Sunderbuns beyond Mutlah. Among them was an intelligent young fellow, clerk in a merchant's office in Calcutta, who spoke English well, carried a little Terry breech-loading carbine, and seemed a bit of a sportsman. His name was Beni Madhub Mozoomdar, but I called him "Terry" for short. We got talking, and told each other our plans. The upshot of it was that I was invited to join them, and was very glad to do so. It was a party of five—a pleader of the Sudder (High) Court of Calcutta (owner of the estate we were bound for), and four of his relatives and friends. Europeans generally are not much in sympathy with Bengali Baboos, but I am bound to say that these gentlemen treated me, a stranger, with the greatest kindness and attention. They entertained me with true hospitality,—gave me the best they had, and often apologised for being able to offer nothing better. They would not hear of taking payment for anything, and behaved throughout as courteous and considerate hosts. Their advent at this particular time seemed almost providential, and thanks to them, what might have been a wild-goose chase, beginning and ending at Mutlah, became a novel and enjoyable excursion.

From Chapahati the route to Mutlah was by trolly, a convenient vehicle something like a dog-cart, propelled by coolies running along the rails, on which their bare feet give them a good hold. Similar contrivances are seen on English railways, but the Indian trolly is a superior article, much used by railway officials travelling on inspection or other duty. The coolies run till the trolly has good "way" on—then jump up behind and ride till the impetus is nearly exhausted, when they drop off and take another spell on foot. The pace averages over four miles an hour. Any break in the line is got over by taking the body off the wheels, and carrying the parts across. This had to be done at an unfinished bridge over one of the channels that abound in this watery country; and finally reaching Mutlah about noon, we waited for boats coming round from Calcutta to take the party to their ultimate destination.

¹ These grants are made on favourable terms, with certain conditions as regards clearing, cultivation, etc. Some are very large: this one "Terry" said was 22,000 *bigas* (a *biga* = $\frac{1}{3}$ of an acre nearly).

Mutlah or Port Canning was once thought to have a great future before it; and some years after, while the company formed to promote the enterprise was in full swing, the local papers had accounts of buildings being erected, streets planned, jetties put up, moorings laid down, etc., and there even arose a Port Canning Municipality. The place was declared a port, and a notification to that effect published in the *Government Gazette*; the channel was buoyed off, and a light-ship anchored off the mouth of the river. But the expected ships did not arrive; and the tortuous and dangerous but familiar Hooghly suffered little if at all from competition of the sister stream,—an instance of the difficulty there is in diverting commerce into new channels. The rise and fall of the Port Canning scheme is matter of local history, with which this narrative has nothing to do. What the place looks like now I have no idea, and have never again set eyes on it. In December 1862 there were bricks and unfinished buildings, a small hut at the end of the line that served as a station, and a few houses scattered about. Shipping was represented by a three-masted hulk, probably for the accommodation of the railway people, anchored opposite the works, and a little schooner with red ensign, lying out in the stream. Looking down the Mutlah there was unbroken jungle, through which the river rolled its turbid waters to the sea. Something like Eden in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, with the railway thrown in.

The rest of the journey was comfortably performed in two boats, sent round from Calcutta. “Terry” and I with one of his friends occupied a boat something like a “dingy” but larger, the others following in an English-built ship’s boat that had been bought by one of the Baboos and fitted with a stern-cabin for river excursions. Our boat being lighter, we went ahead and reached our destination first.

It was dark when we arrived at the coolie settlement, on a creek off the Mutlah. This was just a collection of huts for the coolies employed in clearing the waste land and preparing it for cultivation. Some two miles off was a tank, at which a tiger was said to come and drink at night, and here I proposed to sit on the chance of getting a shot. A party of *shikaris* (native hunters) from the settlement carried my traps and guided me to the tank, at one end of which a *machán* or platform had been put up in a tree. The tank was an oblong excavation, the earth piled up all round, and dry except for a little pool at the bottom, which was full

of water. The men said in a whisper that if the tiger came to drink as usual, his path would be across the banked-up earth at the end nearest the tree, at the foot of which I took my station. Having deposited my wraps and a big knife with which "Terry" had armed me, they departed. I had asked to be alone ; not that I preferred solitude, but because this seemed best, one person being more likely to keep still than two or more. Certainly it was a long and dreary vigil, away in the jungle, with no prospect of a visit before morning from anything human. For some time I remained on the alert, and once, shortly after the men left, thought I heard a low grunt or growl which made me feel very "all overish," till seeing nothing I concluded it might have been fancy. Then the night breeze now and again stirred the great fan-like fronds of a *Palmyra* palm that stood a few yards off, making a rustling sound disagreeably mysterious till its cause was discovered. The silence was intense ; even the crackling of a twig or dry leaf accidentally trodden on seemed to make quite a loud noise. Now and then arose a clear ringing cry, perhaps of a deer, or some night-bird. But for these sounds, and the occasional distant barking of a dog from the coolie settlement, there was nothing to break the almost oppressive stillness. The night was not pitch-dark ; large objects were easily visible ; the general form of the tank could be made out, and there was a slight reflection from the sky on the pool of water at the bottom ; but it was too dark to distinguish details. A rug and overcoat were acceptable, though it was not very cold. It was the 25th of December, and I amused myself with wondering what people at home were doing, and thinking I had never spent so queer a Christmas before. I got drowsy too, and had to move about to keep awake ; and so the night wore slowly on till at last to my great delight there appeared unmistakable signs of dawn. I had imagined the horizon was brightening once before, but found I had been looking in the wrong direction. As the light increased my eyes suddenly rested on what looked something like a tiger's head peering over the bank, so I watched, but the thing never moved, and presently I perceived to my disgust that it was an empty basket used for carrying earth, and left there by the coolies excavating the tank !

It was almost broad daylight, when at a little distance there was a guttural sound between a snarl and a yawn, ending in a low growl—

“a-a-a-o-o-o-gh!”—which I recognised as having heard before from a tiger at the Zoo. Expecting that the beast was at last coming to drink, I picked up my weapons, and posting myself behind the tree, waited some time, but nothing showed itself; so I at last concluded that my first attempt to pot a tiger was not to be successful. But it was something to have *heard* one.

How welcome was the morning, after the long dreary night, can best be imagined by those who have kept watch through the dark hours. The sky brightened, the air was pleasantly cool, the trees around looked soft and green, and jungle-cocks crowing to each other contributed the cheerful sounds of wild but harmless animal life. Dismissing all thoughts of the tiger, I left my post, and taking my revolver, began to reconnoitre. I explored the tank and its surroundings, and descending from the high bank to the cleared level below, pushed into the jungle a little way, which was very dense and slightly thorny. Presently “Terry” came along with the *shikaris*, all pleased to see me, as indeed I was to see them. Nothing like a few hours of solitude to make one appreciate the society of his fellows, even though their colour be a few shades darker than his own. The good Baboos had been in a great state about me all night, keeping men ready to start off as soon as they heard the report of my rifle; and they had given “Terry” a scolding for letting me go alone, which was hard lines, as he had only complied with my wishes. “Terry” told me that the *shikaris* looked upon me as a mighty hunter, whose very presence had sufficed to scare away the tiger from his accustomed haunt.

We lit our cheroots and started back, returning by a different route from mine of the previous night, along the top of a causeway that encircled the cleared portion of the lot, serving partly as a road, partly to keep out the salt water which at high tides would otherwise inundate the clearing. We found many tracks of deer, and some of a tiger; among these the *shikaris* pointed out several as quite fresh. These were outside the causeway, not far from the tank, at a place where the uncleared jungle was very near; so it seemed that the animal just heard must have been prowling between the causeway and the jungle. We found the rest of our friends at the coolie settlement, and were heartily welcomed, the old gentleman who headed the party being quite paternal in his reception. I

apologised for causing them anxiety, as was but proper, for their solicitude appeared to be very genuine.

The night-watch and early walk had sharpened my appetite, and my kind hosts had provided a sumptuous breakfast *à l'Indienne*, "served up in one of the huts on two flat dishes of brass, one of which was heaped up with rice, splendidly boiled (the natives have enough experience in doing rice, and so cook it capitally) flanked by sundry members of a duck,—curried, I think. The other contained a lot of fried fish, just caught in the creek, and very nice—little fish they were, about the size of minnows or roach—and besides this there was a regular pile of hand-made bread, much more than I could get through. 'Hand-made bread' is a round, very thin cake, hardly so thick as a pancake, of a whitey-brown colour, and rather tough."¹ *Chupatties*, as these are called, are very fair substitutes for bread if this is not to be had. There was a huge brass mug of water (Hindus eat and drink mostly from brass vessels, kept scrupulously clean) and brandy to qualify it. This, with native sweetmeats to follow, made with sugar and ghee, or clarified butter, was not bad fare in the jungle. There was a large audience of natives, standing and squatting, and all staring hard. Perhaps they did not often get so near a view of a Sahib, and determined to make the most of it.

A few more days were spent in the Sunderbuns with the Baboos, but nothing was fated to fall either to "Terry's" carbine or my Westley-Richards. He and I sat over the tank again the following night, this time with a kid tied up as bait, and once there was an alarm of something moving under our *machán*, which elicited a shot, but nothing resulted. Afterwards some native hunters came by in a boat, with a tame decoy-deer on board, and were going to show great sport, but failed to do so, and at last we made up our minds that we must return empty-handed. We got back to Calcutta by water, and I was not sorry to find myself once more in civilised surroundings.

Soon after this Yardley and I parted company for a time. He had intended to join one of the chummeries at Dum Dum, but was disappointed as it broke up unexpectedly. I had meantime arranged to live with another civilian of our year, bound for the North-West Provinces. About this time I bought a horse from the stables of Esau bin Curtas for Rs. 750

¹ Extract from Diary.

(then about £75). He was sold as an Arab, but was not pure-bred, being what is called a Gulf Arab, from the Persian Gulf. Little "Dick" was not much to look at, but soon proved himself a good one. Being now mounted, I was able to explore the neighbourhood, and in one of my first rides came across a sight common enough in India, but new to me—the carcase of a bullock surrounded by a crowd of hungry vultures and a paria dog. The latter retreated a little as we approached, but the birds held their ground, and went on with their feast, hissing like geese, spreading their immense wings, and making at each other in a threatening manner when a difference arose about some dainty morsel. Of the dog they took little or no notice. They looked very comical marching about, lifting their legs as if practising the goose-step. I saw one thrust head and neck right into the carcase, and withdraw it in a state that showed nature's wisdom in giving them bare necks. Loathsome as these birds are, they are most useful scavengers.

My experience of Calcutta festivities was limited. A few invitations to dinner resulted from my "tickets for soup," and there was a dance at Belvedere on New Year's Eve. A more exalted ceremony was a levée at Government House held by Lord Elgin, the Viceroy. Here was a great show of ladies' dresses and military uniforms, with a sufficient sprinkling of civilian black coats, and rather a crush in the entrance and presence chambers—much the same as in London probably, on a smaller scale.

I passed in Urdu at the February examination, and about this time my friend Yardley, with three other civilians of our year, established a chummary at Barrackpore. The weather began to get hot, and on the 1st of March punkahs were started at dinner. This marks the advent of the hot weather, as commencing fires does of the winter at home. The second language (Bengali) I succeeded in passing at the April examination along with W. W. (now Sir William) Hunter, who headed the list at the final examination in London, thus gaining the Government donation of Rs. 800 given to those who pass completely within four months of arrival. We were both honoured with invitations to breakfast from Sir Charles Trevelyan, who as President of the Board of Examiners had much to do with junior civilians. Here we met his son, now Sir George Trevelyan, who had lately taken his degree at Cambridge, and was then chiefly known as the author of "Letters from a Competition Wallah." Sir

Charles entertained us with his own experiences in Calcutta years ago, when young civilians from Haileybury were quartered in a sort of barrack still known as "Writers' Buildings,"¹ and thought something of the kind was wanted now, instead of leaving newly joined men to shift for themselves. A change in this direction might have been made, had the old plan of keeping men "in College" continued; but as already observed, men are now posted and sent to their stations on arrival.

Having passed in both languages, I was now qualified for service, and might have joined at once. Sir Charles however advised my reading for "High Proficiency," a certificate of which entitled the holder to another donation of Rs. 700 or Rs. 800, and this jumped with my inclinations, as I had lately paid a visit to Yardley's chummary, and proposed to join it. So on the 4th of May I left Calcutta for Barrackpore.

¹ Since renovated, and used as office buildings of the Bengal Government.

CHAPTER III

OUR CHUMMERY AT BARRACKPORE.—A TRIP TO SHERGHOTTY.—1863.

BARRACKPORE is a quiet little station,¹ with trim bungalows and broad roads, parallel or at right angles to the river. It was here that some of the first signs of mutiny among the Sepoys appeared in 1857. The Viceroy has a lodge at Barrackpore in a park prettily laid out along the river side, with fine trees and artificial undulations, and a menagerie containing amongst others a specimen of that rare animal the black leopard. Lady Canning's tomb stands in the Park, many of the beauties of which owe their existence to her care and good taste. Houses in Barrackpore are numbered, and boards at the entrance-gates are inscribed with names of occupants,—a convenient arrangement for new comers, who according to Indian custom have to call on the older residents, instead of being first called on. Our house was No. 34, in the second line of road from the river. Being a cantonment, the community was largely military, comprising a battery of Artillery, a detachment of the 13th Light Infantry, one or two Sikh regiments, and the "Lahore Light Horse," Eurasian cavalry regiment raised for service during the Mutiny. Their mess-house was close to our chummary, and we were on friendly terms with the corps, who made us honorary members of the mess, and were very pleasant neighbours.

The chummary at first numbered four members—I made five. One was an Oxonian—three hailed from the sister university, and the fifth was from Dublin. No. 34 had quite a menagerie—a hill squirrel; monkey; porcupine; parrot; some small birds in a cage; a young jackal; mungoose, and an assortment of dogs. The squirrel, a handsome fellow, dark red-brown with a long bushy tail, was called

¹ This was Barrackpore in 1863.

"Adjidaumo" after the squirrel in *Miawatha*, but also answered to the name of "Mumbo Jumbo." He was a great pet, and in confidential moments would sit on your shoulder and nibble your ear. He contracted dissipated habits with us, and got to like brandy and lemonade. "Jaeko" the monkey was a playful little beast, and fond of a romp. The porcupine was a character, generally kept in a "godown" or outhouse, but sometimes allowed indoors where he would go trotting about after his master. When angry he would stamp with one foot, and sometimes charge backwards with quills erect, when it was well to get out of the way. I contributed a talking mina to the livestock, and two mongrel pups. There was a joint-stock buggy and horse, and each of us had his own mount. "Dick" my gallant grey had accompanied me from Calcutta: among his stable companions the only one that dwells in my memory is a little chestnut pony belonging to Graves the Dublin man, who called him "Xit" after the dwarf in one of Harrison Ainsworth's novels,—a tiny tat, but with a wonderful spirit.

Houses in Barrackpore were mostly bungalows with flat (terraced) roofs, lofty rooms and deep verandahs, standing in grassy compounds shaded by trees and containing bits of garden and handsome flowering shrubs. The country was an agreeable change after Calcutta; and life in a chummery with members of the same service far pleasanter than in a boarding-house among strangers.

The game of hockey on horseback, *chaugán* or *kang gai*¹ (polo was a name then unheard of) flourished at Barrackpore. Imported from up country, it was energetically taken up by the Lahore Light Horse, several of the officers being good players. The Barrackpore *Maidán*, smaller than that of Calcutta, was large enough for the more limited requirements of the station, both for parade and recreation. Graves was a frequent player, and introduced me to the field. The quadrupeds were a "holberry" lot, of all breeds and sizes: there was no rule as to height, and from ten hands nothing (about the stature of the redoubtable "Xit") to fourteen hands or more, there was great variety.

¹ *Kang gai* is the name used in Manipore, where pony-hockey is the national game. It is called *chaugán* in the North-West. A similar game was, it seems, known in Persia, vide the *Arabian Nights*, "History of the Greek King and Douban the Physician."

My own "Dick" was fourteen or thereabouts; Dr. Bremner of the Lahore Light Horse rode a biting brute of a galloway with his nose in a muzzle "for the safety of the public"; Farrell the jolly "vet" of the same regiment bestrode a small pony; Lient. Apperley, a very dashing player, had an animal that was quite a horse, and so on. This mixture of sizes was rather hard upon the little ones, who found it difficult to hold their own against the heavier weight and longer legs of their big opponents; but in twisting and turning the ponies had certainly the advantage. Accidents were not frequent; but once young Garbett, son of the station chaplain, quite a boy on a small pony, got thrown in a scrimmage: luckily no harm resulted, but he might easily have been kicked or trampled in the *mêlée*.

Play commenced about half-past five in the cool of the evening, shortly before which time riders would be wending their way to the rendezvous, followed by *syces* carrying bundles of hockey-sticks—Malacca canes, with a wooden cross-piece fitted to one end at a certain angle, the handle whipped round with cord to give a firm grip, and with a loop for the wrist. The sticks used at Barrackpore were rather long and heavy, so many of the men having tall mounts, and were made (price R. 1 each) by a trooper of the L. L. Horse. The *Maidín* was a lively sight on hockey evenings,—a wide stretch of grass bordered by trees and the neat white buildings of the regimental lines: in front a group of men and horses, most of the former wearing the blue club uniform, and a gathering of spectators outside the flags marking the ground and goals. Sides having been chosen, the players were drawn up in two opposite parties, each in front of the goal they had to defend. At a given signal a coolie standing in the middle of the ground threw the ball into the air, when one player from either side rode out at it full tilt, each trying to secure the first hit, and being backed up by his comrades from behind. The play then became general, and as at football or hockey consisted largely of scrimmages varied by rushes, as one or other of the players managed to collar the ball and carry it along, till a well-directed hit from either side landed it between the adversaries goal-flags and secured a victory. It was a fine game, but hard work; and twice a week was generally enough for the ponies, not to mention

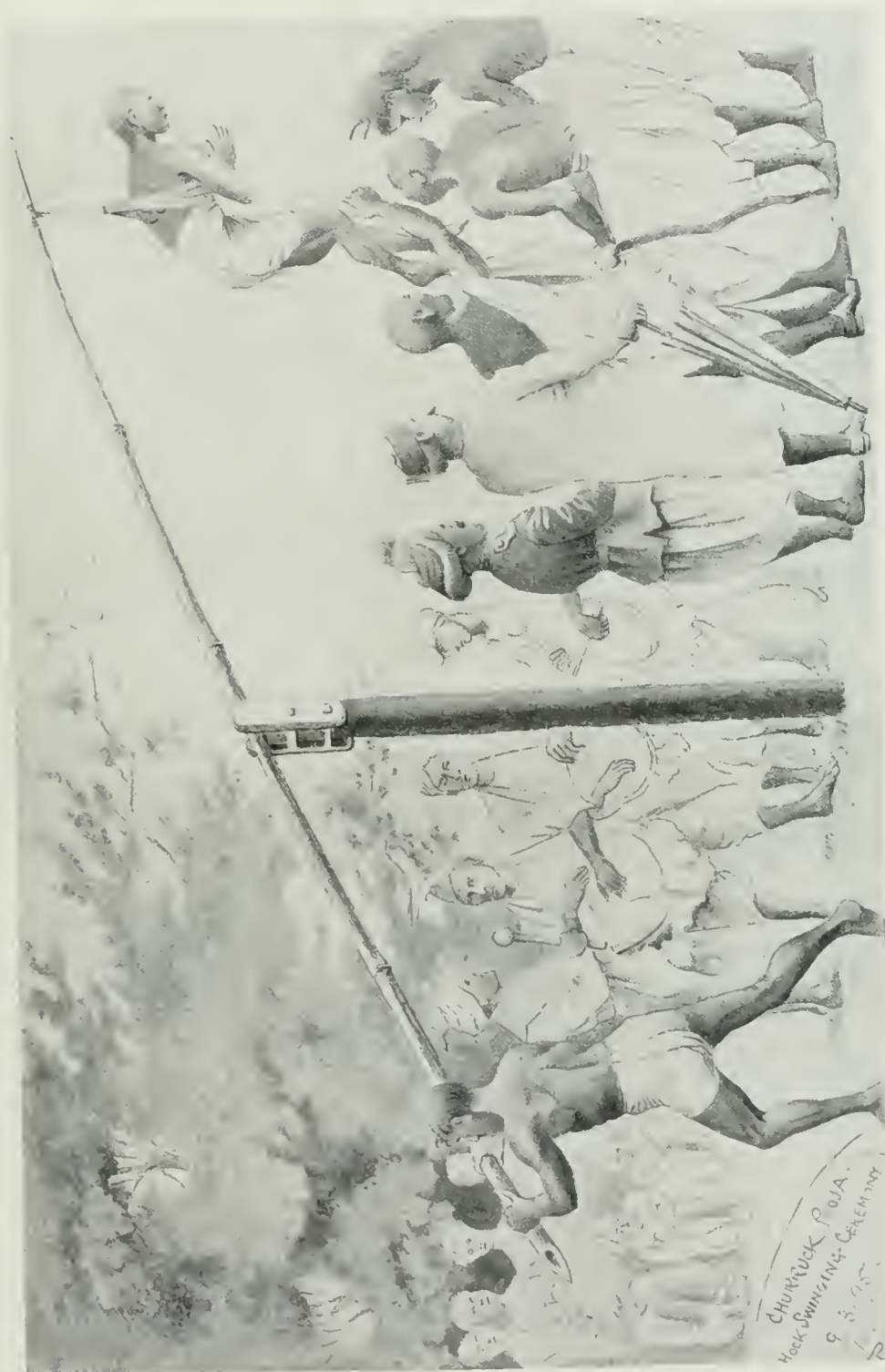


the riders. Hokey was not so much played then as now, and had not been introduced into England; but Calcutta had its club, and boasted some good players.

One Sunday two of us made an excursion to the French settlement of Chandernagore,¹ further up than Barrackpore, across the river, a pretty little station with a waterside promenade and the French flag floating conspicuously in honour of the day, a Roman Catholic Cathedral, and a hotel which did not seem much frequented, there being but one guest at the table d'hôte besides ourselves. The soldiers we saw were dressed something like Zouaves, in short jackets, knickerbockers and gaiters—a costume better suited to the figure of the average Sepoy than the stiffer uniform of tunic and trousers then worn by British regiments.


On the 13th May we rode over to Isherpore, by the river near Barrackpore, where a *Churruck Pooja* or Hindoo Swinging-Festival was being held, in honour of one of the gods or goddesses of the Hindu Pantheon,—probably Kali, the goddess of Destruction, whose rites are or were celebrated in a sanguinary manner, with various forms of self-torture. One of these was the *Churruck* or hook-swinging, the devotees being slung to an apparatus with hooks stuck in their backs, and swung round in the air to the admiration of the spectators. I had witnessed one of these performances in a Calcutta suburb shortly before, and saw the whole operation. The man to be swung was led up to one who seemed to be a priest, knelt down before him, bowing his head to the ground, and remained in this posture while the priest dipped his forefinger and thumb into a heap of ashes, with which he made two marks on each side of the man's back near the shoulder-blades. An attendant pinched up the flesh at the places marked, and ran the hooks through. The man then got up and walked to the swinging-machine,—a long spar or lever, balanced on a pivot. He seemed by no means an unwilling victim, but made his way through the crowd with a decided swagger, the hooks with cords attached sticking in his shoulders, and blood streaming down his back. There was no mistake about this part of the performance, but the man seemed indifferent, and rather proud of his position. He was then hung to one end of the lever, a band being passed round his chest to reduce the strain on the hooks which even with this support was

¹ Sanskrit *chandan-nagar* = city of sandal-wood.



CHUKRUCK POJA.
HOCK SWINGING, CENEM, NY.
9 3. 1905

considerable, the flesh being dragged up in a very unpleasant-looking manner,—and being hoisted into the air was swung for some time. At Isherpore, four men at once were slung to a revolving apparatus something like a “merry-go-round” arranged vertically, and were raised and lowered alternately as the machine was turned by hand. The demeanour of the victims did not indicate severe physical pain; and the horrors of the practice have no doubt been exaggerated. The hook-sticking part of the performance is no longer allowed: men may be swung, but must be simply tied up.

One day a showman came along with two monkeys and a goat, and a little tambourine with clappers, which twirled rapidly from side to side to make a great rattling and announce the performer’s approach, as do the Pan-pipes and big drum the Punch and Judy show at home. The monkeys did some tricks, but the best part of the programme was given by the goat. The man took a little piece of wood shaped like a dice-box () and made the goat get on it with all four feet at once, for which there was barely room. He then insinuated another piece on the top, upon which the goat wriggled his feet somehow, and so went on, adding piece after piece, till at last the goat stood on a regular column of six or eight loose joints,—a marvellous exhibition of balance and surefootedness.

The 10th of June had been fixed for a hockey-match in Calcutta, between the rival clubs of the metropolis and Barrackpore. At the last moment two of the best Barrackpore men were disabled, one by fever, the other with both ankles sprained. The misfortune of these gentlemen brought luck to the chummery; Graves being selected to fill one of the vacancies, and I though quite a beginner for the other. Calcutta was Red; Barrackpore Blue. I had not the Club uniform; but one of the men lent me a blue shirt, which, with a red sash, white trousers and brown riding-boots did very well. Graves was more correctly got up,—knickerbockers and gorgeous striped stockings, and the regulation club cap—blue with red piping.

For Calcutta were Captain Beadon, the Lieut.-Governor’s son and aide-de-camp; three officers of the 43rd Light Infantry, then quartered in Fort William,¹ a jovial indigo-planter popularly known as Bobby Hills,

¹ Soon after sent to New Zealand, where they served against the Maoris, and suffered severely in the affair of the Gate Pah.

a crack rider and keen sportsman, and one or two others. Our side comprised Farrell the "vet" of the L. L. Horse and his pony "Caractacus," both hard players; Lieut. Apperley and Dr. Bremner of the same corps, Broome and O'Donel belonging to Punjabi regiments, Dr. De Fabeck of the Artillery, Graves and myself. The Calcutta side began by winning two goals running, much to our disgust; but the last three were credited to Barrackpore, so the Blues were victorious after all. My share in the result was insignificant, my energies being mostly expended in hitting the ground hard, in vain attempts to smite the ball. Once I dropped my stick, and when I got off to pick it up, master "Dick" lashed out and caught one of our adversaries on the leg. The riding-boot saved him to some extent, but he used strong language, which was certainly excusable. The kick was probably meant for the pony: perhaps "Dick" wanted to help our side by disabling one of the enemy. In the evening both sides dined together in the Town Hall: some capital songs followed, also a Dutch chorus; and the party did not break up till the small hours.

About this time the rains began; at which season the atmosphere in and near Calcutta becomes damp and blue-mouldy; those who can, get away to the Hills or take a run home; and those who cannot, stay where they are and make the best of it. The "monsoon" is rather the indoor time, as the winter in England: with the country more or less under water there is not much inducement to go beyond station limits where roads are good; and during the heavy and often sudden downpours that occur between May and November, it is well to be within reach of shelter. We played hockey when the *Maidán* was dry enough, and took rides in the neighbourhood, along roads that were still passable. Calcutta was easily accessible by train, and the chummery was seldom long without guests, so time did not hang heavy. Nor to tell the truth did we turn to our books with such zeal as might have been expected, to wile away the rainy hours. In fact, we were rather idle; our moonshees had an easy time of it; and it was not till the 1st of August that I passed in High Proficiency. In the same month, tired of the flatness of our surroundings, we took a run by rail up to Burdwan, saw the Rajah's palace and menagerie, and went on to RaneeGUNGE, found the comparative coolness of the uplands a refreshing change from the steamy atmosphere of

Calcutta, and feasted our eyes on real hills looming grand in the distance, covered with jungle and capped with clouds. We were so taken up with exploring the place and admiring the scenery, that we lost the last train, arriving just in time to see the red tail-light vanishing in the gloom beyond the platform. So we had to throw ourselves on the hospitality of the little station, and were put up by the Deputy Magistrate and Policeman¹ in two detachments. Fortunately for us, people up country are accustomed to guests dropping in suddenly; so we were made welcome and spent a very pleasant evening.

Soon after our number was reduced by one, Clay being gazetted Assistant Magistrate and Collector to Purneah. The four remaining chums, with two other civilians of our year also living at Barrackpore, anxious to show that even "competition wallahs" were not without social ambition, had the audacity to give a "Civil Service Ball," which was voted a success, the only hitch being that the bullock-carts bringing the refreshments from Calcutta were very late in arriving. A Calcutta gentleman kindly lent his house, which with coloured lamps hung in the verandah looked very well: the floor was in good dancing order: the band of the 31st Punjabis discoursed sweet music: and in spite of the annoying delay in the Commissariat department, of which our guests kindly made light, the ball went off well. The chummary was turned into a regular dormitory that night, or rather next morning, for we did not get home till about gun-fire, at 5 A.M.

On the 7th October the chummary broke up. I had applied to be sent up country, and was ordered to Chittagong: the three others were too small a number to keep up the house. Last days are always dreary: we had been very happy at No. 34, and during all the months we were together there had been no serious disagreement, much less quarrel, in our little household. My chums were right good fellows, and we were sorry to part company. The exodus was quite pathetic: Gribble the Oxonian had left earlier in the day; so only Graves, Yardley and I remained. After we had paid the servants, cleared off the furniture and started the horses the house looked empty and deserted, and it was a relief to get away. We walked across the Park, our frequent resort on

¹ Ranceeunge being a subdivision, is in charge of a subordinate magistrate, and Assistant Superintendent of Police.

band nights, taking a last farewell of the place,—Graves and Yardley carrying the squirrel between them, and a ticea gari following, with my two pups inside, and the mungoose on the roof. It was a mournful procession to the railway station : on arrival at Sealdah (Calcutta terminus of the Eastern Bengal Railway) eight annas were charged for “Mumbo Jumbo,” which the Baboo described as a *mouse*.

Finding from the Secretariat that two months were allowed for joining at Chittagong (the steamer does it in two days) I decided to pay a long projected visit to my sister, whose husband, Engineer in charge of a Division of the Grand Trunk Road, was stationed at Sherghotty in the Gya district, not far from Patna. I left Howrah (opposite Calcutta) by the night train of the 8th October for Bankipore,¹ whence the journey had to be made by palki through Gya to Sherghotty. There is a railway to Gya now, but the route was then by road. At Bhangulpore some men got in who had been attending one of the examinations held half-yearly at Commissioners’ headquarters, which all have to pass before being eligible for promotion. Among them was a civilian of our year who introduced me to a gentleman in the Police from Sherghotty, now returning to that station. So on arrival at Bankipore we pursued our journey by palki in company.

The palki used up country is larger than the Calcutta vehicle, and roomy enough to lie full length,—a great comfort when travelling at night. Eight bearers (or twelve if the load is heavy, or great speed desired) are allotted to each palki, and relieve each other in sets of four. There are also coolies and banghy-wallahs² to carry luggage, and one of the men bears a flaming torch, which he feeds with oil from a vessel with a long neck. This was before kerosene oil and hurricane lanterns came into fashion ; and very odoriferous was the torch, if the bearer got to windward of the palki. A procession of two or more palkis going along at night, the torchlight gleaming on the bare bodies of the men and reflected from the front windows and bright sides of the palkis, often painted white for coolness, is very picturesque.

¹ Bankipore is the civil station, Dinapore the military cantonment, and Patna the native city.

² The *banghy* is a bamboo, dressed and tapering at the ends, light and springy, which is balanced on the shoulder, the loads being hung by cords to each end.



We went all night from Bankipore, and halted during the heat of the day at a place called Jehanabad, putting up with the Assistant Engineer in charge of the Patna-Gya branch road, a hospitable Irishman, who consoled himself for the want of society with a pack of dogs, among them a fine Australian kangaroo-hound named "Spring," like a Scotch deerhound but rather larger and more powerfully built, gentle as a lamb. Duell told us he was training him to tackle a wolf, a formidable task for any dog, single-handed. To keep this canine company in order, Duell had a big whip; and for more dangerous beasts his rifle, with which he had lately settled a leopard that got amongst some of his men working on a bridge, and was shot in the act of charging. After dinner we again started, reaching Gya next morning.

It was broad daylight as we entered the bazaar, a wide street lined with native shops at the foot of bare rocky hills. These natural fire-bricks make Gya like a furnace in the hot weather, but on this October morning the air was fresh and clear; and after a night's journey in a close palki it was a relief to get out and walk. After a wash and brush-up at the *dák* bungalow (travellers' rest-house) I went to the Deputy Opium Agent's, where my sister had been on a visit, but found that she had gone back to Sherghotty. Mr. Field, the Agent, was himself under marching orders, and his house all topsy-turvy, in no condition to receive a guest. Returning to the *dák* bungalow I was intercepted by a native policeman, and carried off to the hospitable residence of Lieut. Waller, the District Superintendent of Police, with whom I found my travelling companion also located. The way these Anglo-Indians take in a perfect stranger and sumptuously entertain him is refreshing and agreeably surprising to a new arrival. We were first driven off to the station swimming bath, a covered-in place with deliciously cool water and plenty of it, where we splashed about to our hearts' content; then back to breakfast, when Mrs. Waller appeared, a charming hostess, and her two small children. One of these, a rosy-faced little fellow, amused himself marching up and down with a toy gun on his shoulder, shouting the words of command which he had learnt from the constables.

Some native *shikáris* brought in a dead wolf for the Government reward (Rs. 4 or 5) which Waller paid, cutting off one of the beast's

cars to prevent the carcase being presented a second time. Wolves in Behar do much mischief, carrying off children, and sometimes two or three together even attacking adults.

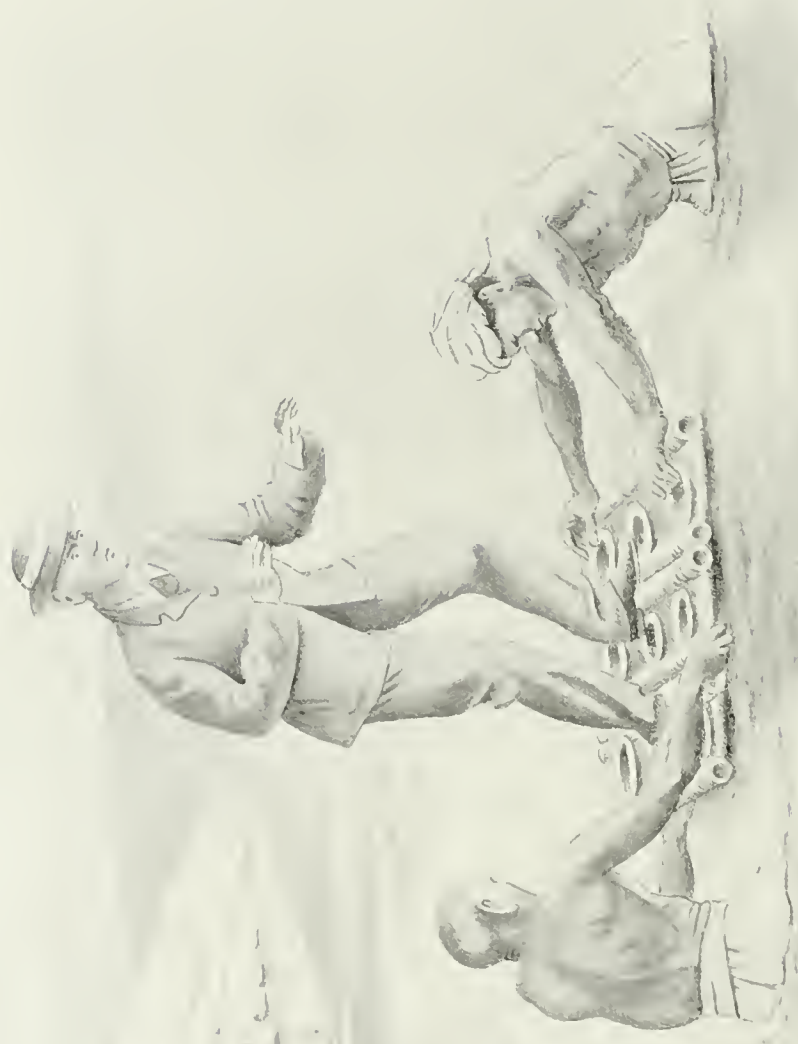
Waller was a great hand at the *ghulel*, or Indian pellet-bow, with which an expert shooter can break bottles or knock over birds at a good distance. The bow is of bamboo, tapering to the ends; the string (gut) is double, the two strings being kept apart by a spanner near the top. Nearly opposite but a little above the grip, a piece of webbing is woven between the strings to receive the pellet, which is kept in position with forefinger and thumb. In letting fly, the left hand is bent slightly outwards from the wrist, so as to shoot clear of the bamboo and the shooter's thumb, which might otherwise get hurt, for well-made clay pellets, sun-baked, are nearly as hard as marbles, and fly with great force. Waller bombarded a wasps' nest in a tree, the occupants of which came flying out in a rage, but found nothing to vent it



on. The nest was at some height: had it been nearer the verandah, the attack might have been risky. In the afternoon I climbed one of the rocky hills, and had a fine view of the station, river, and surrounding landscape. Presently one of Waller's constables came with an umbrella to keep off the sun, which however was not needed, as I had borrowed a big hat. We sat down in the shade and tried to converse, but though lately passed in languages I did not make much of the colloquial, which was perhaps excusable, as they speak Hindi in Behar. The general drift of his discourse was pretty clear; that he had served in the Mutiny and been wounded in the leg (he bared his calf, or the place where the calf should be, for inspection); and that his pay was small, and disproportioned to his deserts. No doubt he thought this a good opportunity of appealing to the sympathies of one destined to become a Magistrate Sahib, and possible dispenser of patronage.

Lying at ease in a rocky hollow, I noticed a number of moving objects overhead, which turned out to be a flight of locusts. They filled the air like snowflakes, the lower part of the swarm being divided by the hill on which I was lying into two streams, one of

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which came flying round the shoulder of the hill, while the other poured through the gorge between my hill and the next. The two then reunited and went on. The flying insects crossed and recrossed in a mazy dance, and the sky was darkened as by a passing cloud. Few of the locusts settled near us, as we were in a sheltered corner; but going down the hill the ground was covered, and they kept flying up almost at every step. My attendant caught and showed me one,—a handsome reddish insect like a large grasshopper with powerful wings. This was the only flight of locusts I ever saw.

Dinner over, I took leave of my kind host and hostess, and after another night in the palki arrived early at Sherghotty, where I found my relations living in a roomy bungalow with high thatched roof and deep verandahs, in a large compound ornamented with fine trees and shrubs, a flower-garden near the house and masonry platform (*chabootra*) for the evening lounge; well-stocked kitchen-garden and irrigation well. There were four entrances to the compound, part of which was allowed to run wild in picturesque beauty. A broad drive under a shady avenue led to one of the entrances and down to the river beyond. Two large bridges were then building at Sherghotty, my brother-in-law C. with three assistants and a large staff being in charge of the work.

The Doorga Pooja holidays¹ now commencing, a trip was planned to Budhgáya, where stands an ancient Buddhist temple, now in charge of a Hindoo high-priest or *Mahant*. Excavations were being made to explore the ruins under C.'s superintendence, so business was combined with pleasure. We followed the Grand Trunk Road across the river Likájan, the bridge over which, a large one of several spans, had lately been breached by a flood. This had to be examined, and to get to it a primitive ferry-boat was used—bamboo framework with empty *ghurras* (earthen water-pots) fitted in, which gave the raft buoyancy enough to carry one person at a time,—propelled by coolies wading through the water, at this season not more than waist-deep in most places. It was rather hard to keep one's balance on so crazy a structure, but the men handled it deftly and got us safely across.

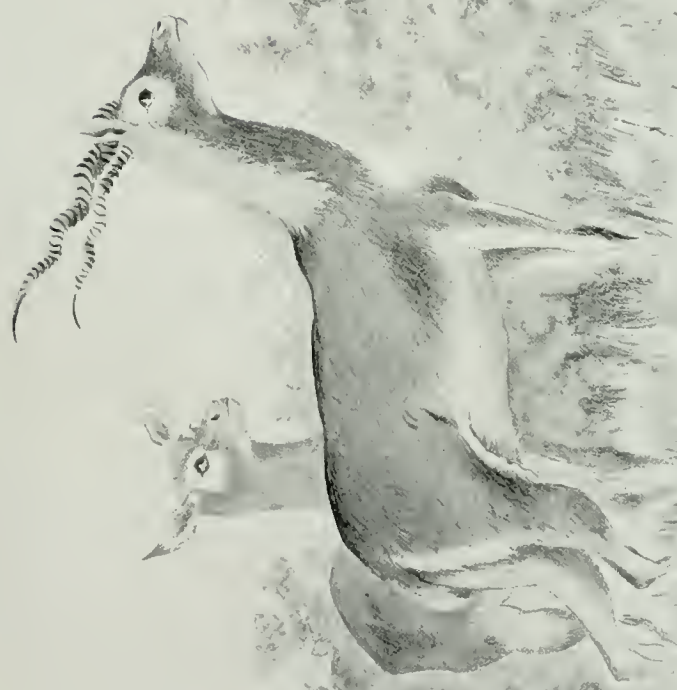
Next morning we crossed the Likájan more comfortably than on the

¹ Hindoo festival, during which offices are closed for twelve days.

raft,—seated on *charpoy*s or native bedsteads, each carried by four coolies,—and leaving the Grand Trunk Road struck into that leading to Patna, and rode to the *dák* bungalow at Mootiana, near which towered an object that looked something like a big factory shaft, but was in fact the temple of Budhgáya. Between Mootiana and the temple was a stretch of promising antelope-ground,—a wide plain covered with scrub jungle and full of holes—bad for riding. Cattle and buffaloes were grazing here and there, also a good many antelope;—these last preferring open ground where their keen sight protects them, to wooded tracts which might afford cover to pursuers. The Indian antelope or black buck is found on the plains of Central and Northern India, sometimes in great numbers. The full-grown male is dark brown or black, vivid white on the belly, with handsome spiral horns. The female is fawn-colour, as also the young male, his tint growing darker with age. They are wary and sharp-sighted animals, very difficult to approach. Natives and cattle they don't mind, being accustomed to see them on their grazing grounds, and the sportsman may chance to get a shot if he can advance amongst a herd of tame animals; but some native cattle are almost as shy of Europeans as the antelope. C. and I separated, and made some persevering and painful stalks:—crawling on hands and knees, or wriggling along like a snake, requires practice, and is rather severe on knees and backbone:—but we were not successful. I tried the plan of having one of the ponies led along, walking under cover of his body till opposite one of the antelope, when I dropped behind a bush and began my approaches, while the pony went on; but the animal was on the alert, and kept retreating as I advanced, so at last I gave up in disgust and rejoined C., who had not been more fortunate. During the afternoon I got two chances, but missed both.

Having crossed the antelope-ground we remounted and rode to our destination, through topes of trees, shady and pleasant after our tramp in the sun. Budhgáya was a small place—a cluster of straggling mud huts round the ancient temple and the Mahant's residence, this last an extensive pile of buildings, the entrance through an arched gateway with rooms over. At one end of a large and well-kept garden was a detached edifice with spacious verandah and broad masonry platform

SAVING AVIATION



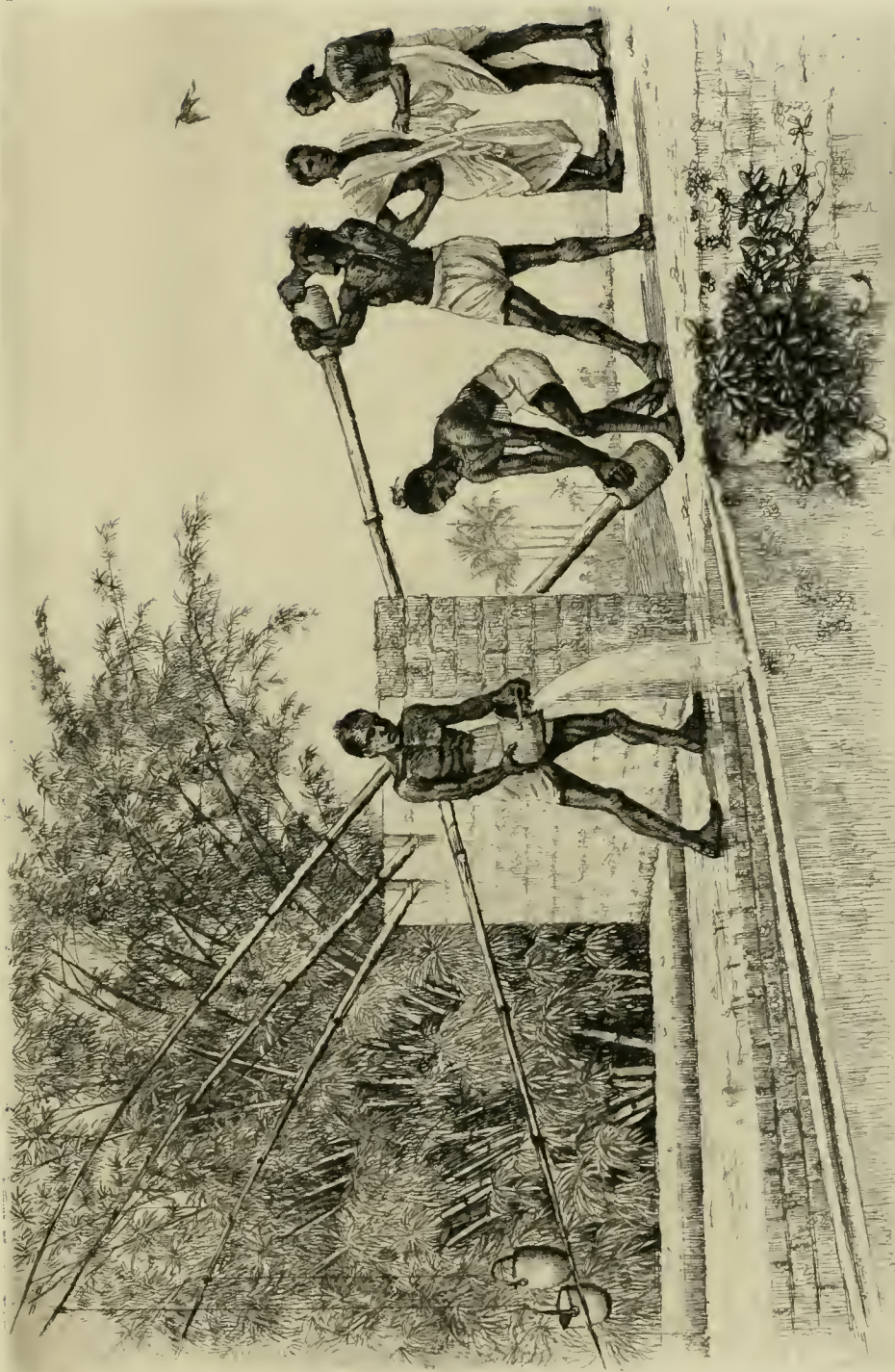
in front, reached by steps from the garden below. This garden-house had been placed at our disposal by the Mahant, and here we found our palkis and servants with the baggage.

The temple of Budhigāya is one of the places of worship which, originally dedicated to the service of the Buddhist faith, were appropriated by the Brahmans when that religion died out in India Proper. The date of its erection is uncertain, but must be very remote. The shrine itself, a rectangular structure of considerable height, forms the base of an obelisk or tall pyramid which is the most striking feature of the temple, the whole built of brick, much weather-worn and overgrown with creepers, but evidently, from remains still visible, once covered with decorations in plaster—niches with little cross-legged figures of Buddha and other ornaments. On one side of the temple was an ancient tree beneath which tradition says that the sage Sakya Muni, after long and holy meditation, obtained the bliss of *Nirvana* or annihilation. In front of the main entrance, opposite the side on which the tree stood, was a courtyard paved with stones bearing inscriptions in a character like Sanskrit. The courtyard was entered through a gateway with pointed arch, which had been half choked with rubbish before the excavations began. These were being carried on in a deep narrow trench on three sides of the temple, the courtyard occupying the fourth. Except in this yard, the surface of the ground was about level with the top of the square base of the obelisk : perhaps it had once been everywhere level with the yard, and what was being excavated was the accumulated rubbish of centuries. Many relics had been found, but in such confusion that it was difficult to make anything of them. The want of symmetrical arrangement was possibly owing to additions made at different periods, altering the character of the original structure. Here was a shrine, well defined, containing a large (headless) figure of Buddha in the usual cross-legged posture : close by, a fragment of masonry wall or platform, a beautiful piece of brick-work, which C. admired with the eye of an expert. Scattered about were curious stone ornaments, little Buddhas innumerable, and loose bricks in great disorder. The workmen had also come across the remains of a massive stone fence which appeared, from traces discovered as far as the excavations had gone, to have extended all round the building. In design it was like a stone

post-and-rails, and at one point in the trench, just below Sakya Muni's tree, the fence was in good preservation, with what was evidently an entrance, a space being left between two uprights higher than the rest, adorned with curious carvings. From the courtyard a flight of steps led to the top of the shrine, which formed the base of the pyramidal superstructure. Most of the figures of Buddha were headless, mutilated no doubt by the usurping Brahmaus. It was strange to think how many centuries had passed since the old Buddhist masons had erected the building round which the *employés* of a British Government were now grubbing up the ground, admiring the solidity and finish of the work brought to light, and perhaps comparing it with that of the modern contractor.

C. got out his measuring tape, and began taking dimensions and notes. Presently the Mahant came along with his "tail," all rather scantily attired in yellow drapery, the high priest himself, a bare-headed and bare-legged old gentleman, being the fattest of the party. This visit of ceremony was rather a bore; but the Mahant was a person to be propitiated, being in charge of the temple, and able to facilitate or obstruct the archaeological investigations then in progress. So there was a good deal of salaaming, and exchanging of compliments in high-flown Oriental style. Hearing that I was a young civilian, the Mahant hoped I might be appointed to that part of the country, which he hinted would gain by the arrangement. Then followed inquiries as to the state of the country; conditions and prospects of the crops; remarks on progress of the excavations and so on; till at last the interview terminated.

The Mahant's garden was watered in an ingenious manner. On a broad masonry platform round the mouth of a huge well with two openings, stood a row of bamboo levers working on pivots, each with a rope and bucket at one end, and a counterpoise at the other. The buckets having been filled and raised by alternately lifting and depressing the counterpoises, were received and emptied into a sloping channel beside the platform. In this the water ran down into the garden, and distributed itself by gravitation over the surface to be irrigated through little trenches opening into the beds. Irrigation is thoroughly understood in Behar, where population is dense and the land closely cultivated: the people as might be expected are excellent gardeners.



On Friday, the 23rd October, we left Budhgáya, and rode across the river running past the Mahant's house, which though rather wide was shallow. During the dry season, rivers in this part of the country hold very little water, most of the bed being dry sand : but after heavy rain they become rushing torrents ; and in building bridges care must be taken to provide waterway enough to carry off the greatest volume that may come down at any time, which may not be more than once or twice in a season. Miscalculation in this respect has caused the collapse of many a bridge in India. Having now left the main road we had a man to show us the way, and made for a place called Baragáng, where more Buddhist remains were reported. We found a ruined mud fort which certainly contained a little figure of Buddha, but this had apparently been brought from Budhgáya or elsewhere, and did not belong to the place. We bivouacked in a beautiful tope of trees near the fort, and slept in our palkis, a very comfortable way of passing the night when no house or tent is available.

Next morning was cold but brilliant. C. shot two green pigeons (*Haryáls*) on a tree in the tope ; lovely birds, of a delicate slate-colour, brightening into light yellow-green underneath and on the wings, which are varied with darker pencilled markings. The legs are red or yellow, and the eyes a rich crimson or purple. It is a fine plump bird, and capital eating, the flesh of the breast partly white and partly brown when cooked. *Haryáls* go about in large flocks, and specially affect the banyan and peepul trees (Indian fig), being fond of the fruit. They are swift on the wing, and the easiest though not most sportsmanlike way to bag them is by taking a pot-shot at a number perched on a tree. They are so much the colour of the foliage, that it is necessary to look closely to distinguish them.

A blue-turbaned chowkeedar or village watchman, one of whose duties under the old village system is to guide travellers on their way, piloted us towards the Grand Trunk Road, for which we were now making. A halt was called at a fine tope, to allow the palkis and servants to come up. Close by was a tank, beside which a very stout man was engaged in devotion in most original fashion, every now and then taking a fierce run off the bank, and going souse into the water with a complete somersault. This acrobatic feat was striking in itself, but its effect was

heightened by the immovable gravity of the old gentleman, who never relaxed a muscle of his countenance. Maybe it was an act of penance; but whatever the motive, I do not remember ever to have seen religious exercises more vigorously performed. Here C. got more green pigeons, four at one shot, a welcome addition to the larder. Mounting our steeds we proceeded, and presently came upon four monkeys under a tree—big fellows, with ash-coloured bodies, long tails, and black faces, set off with a fringe of vivid white. These were specimens of the Lungoor, or Hanumán monkey, common in India, and held in respect by the Hindoos, whose Pantheon includes the monkey-god Hanumán, immortalised in the Ramayana as the ally of Ráma when he went to Lanka (Ceylon) in search of his bride Sita, who had been abducted by the demon Rávana. The monkeys, under Hanumán's orders, made a bridge over which Ráma passed to Ceylon from the mainland.

. In crossing another river, the Mahána, the bed of which was mostly dry sand, with a shallow stream meandering through, our ponies got into a quicksand, and floundered like grampuses. These quicksands are troublesome, and there is nothing to indicate them: the sand looks the same whether shifting or sound, and a rider may suddenly find himself up to the girths without any warning. The best thing to do as a rule is to struggle on as we did, and got through all right. We reached Sherghotty without further adventure, and soon after I returned to Calcutta.

The members of the chummery were still at the Presidency. Gribble was living by himself, and Yardley with Graves had set up house in the rooms occupied by Y. and me nearly a year before, with the pet squirrel, sole survivor of the old menagerie at Barrackpore. Graves's tat, little "Xit," had changed owners, and being now my property was with "Dick," like their master, under orders for Chittagong. A day or two were spent with my old chums and other friends, and after giving them a farewell spread at Wilson's (now the Great Eastern) Hotel, I bade adieu to Calcutta, and on Thursday evening the 5th November went on board the British India Company's steamer *Moulmein*, bound for Chittagong.

CHAPTER IV

CHITTAGONG ; FIRST VISIT. 1863-4.

THE steamer left her moorings soon after daylight on Friday, and by nightfall we were at sea. Next day was spent in crossing the Bay of Bengal : the weather was fair, but the *Moulmein* being small and lively there was motion enough to upset most of her passengers. Towards evening matters improved, and there was a fair attendance at dinner. Among those on board was a civilian named M'Gilpin, last from a subdivision in Midnapore, eastward bound like myself, having been appointed Superintendent of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, a mountainous strip of country east of the Regulation District. Early on Sunday morning we were at anchor off the coast, which looked wild and hilly. The weather was misty, and turned to rain. As soon as the pilot came on board the *Moulmein* crossed the bar and entered the Kurnafuli¹ River, on the north or right bank of which, three or four miles from its mouth, lies the station.

Chittagong is one of the prettiest places in Lower Bengal, the houses built on low hills, between which the roads wind about in a picturesque but, to a new-comer, rather bewildering manner. Some of the hills command fine views of the eastern ranges, whence the river issuing flows in stately curves and widening reaches through rich cultivation to the sea ; below, the riverside bazaar with vessels at anchor in the stream ; and all around the green hill-tops, dotted with white bungalows, and bits of Mahomedan mosque or Hindu temple peeping out from among the trees, the station roads appearing and disappearing like strips of light-coloured ribbon among the valleys and ravines below. The scenery

¹ Sanskrit for "ear-jewel."

has been compared to that of Ceylon, with which it certainly has some points in common—picturesque hills, luxuriant foliage, groves of coconut and betel palms, and the sea at no great distance.

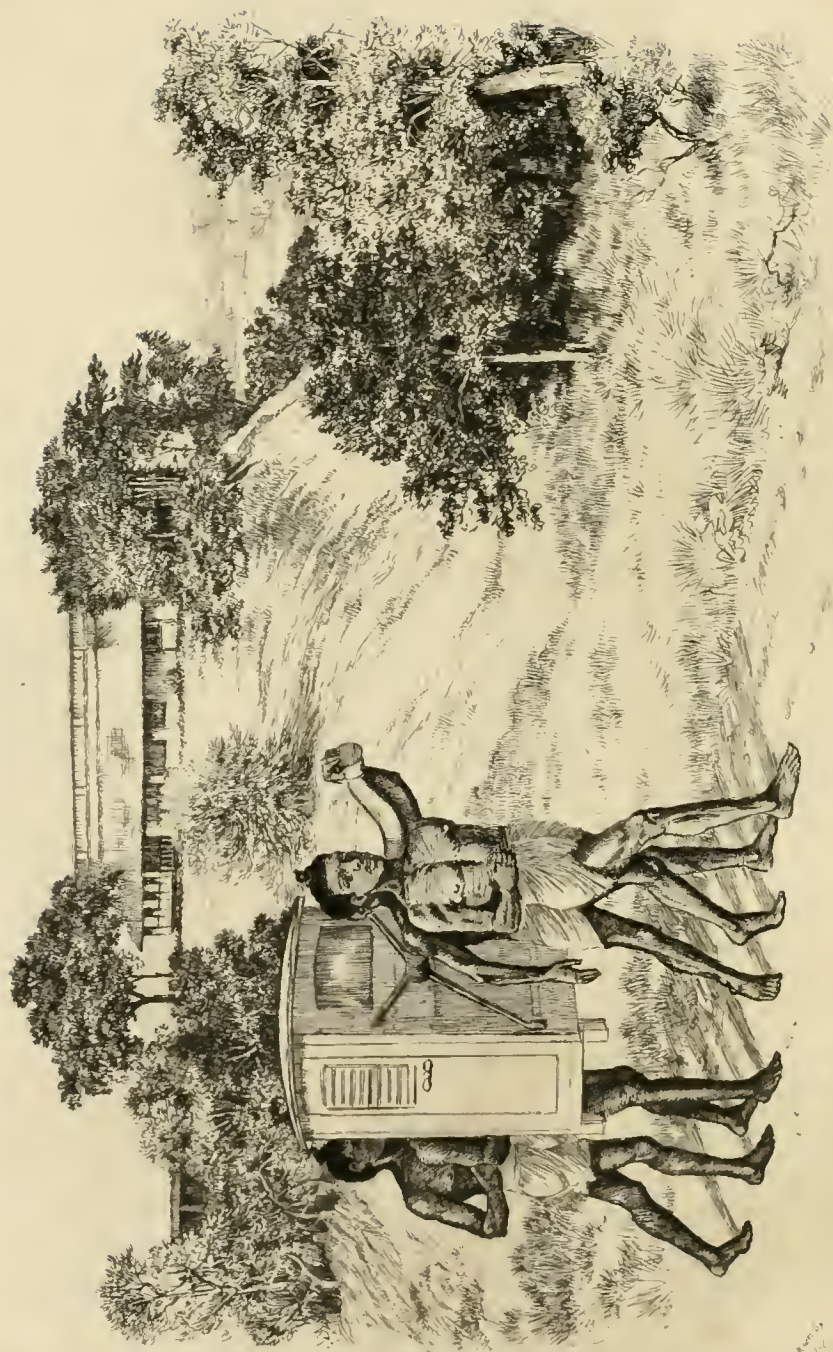
Most of the houses were one-storeyed, with flat roofs and thatched verandahs; Government buildings, and some of the larger private houses were *pukka* throughout, or nearly so. There were *kutchas* bungalows also, *i.e.* buildings of timber and bamboo matting, with thatched roofs. The native quarter and bazaars, being on the ground level, were mostly hidden by trees, and invisible from any but the nearest hills. There was no regular *Maidán*, but in front of the regimental Lines was a grassy stretch, clear of scrub and fairly level, which served as a parade and recreation ground. Here too was “Scandal Corner,” a small bridge at the junction of four cross-roads, on the low parapet of which a seat was arranged, where people met to discuss local topics.

The station possessed a racket-court, billiard table, and swimming-bath—not a regular covered-in place, as at Gya, but a bamboo bathing hut on piles in one corner of a pretty little lake, known as *Pari ka Diggi*, the “Fairies’ (Peris’) Pool.” There was a Parsonage, though at first there was no parson at Chittagong. The Church stood near the Collectorate,—a good-sized building with square tower and a stained glass window, put up by former residents in memory of their escape from the mutineers in 1857.¹

Chittagong is one of the oldest stations of Bengal, and in the trading days of the Company was the site of a factory. Being close to the Burmese border, it was also a military post of some importance. It is now the headquarters of a Commissioner’s Division,² comprising the

¹ The Chittagong mutiny was not very serious. The Sepoys (a remnant of the 34th Regiment, disbanded at Barrackpore) broke out in November, looted the Treasury, forced the jail and released the prisoners, some of whom they took with them. They intended probably to march to Dacca, but on reaching the Fenny River, some forty miles off, were unable to cross, all the boats having been seized by the Magistrate of Noacolly, Mr. F. B. Simson. They then left the main road and made their way north through the jungles of Hill Tippera, heading for Sylhet. This station they never reached: the Sylhet Light Infantry met and beat them on two occasions, after which they dispersed. At Chittagong no one was killed but a native watchman, who had the pluck to withstand the mutineers and was shot at his post.

² There has lately been some talk of transferring this Division to the Province of Assam.



1841
A. L. L.

Regulation Districts of Chittagong, Tippera and Noacolly, with the Hill Tracts of Chittagong, separately administered on the Non-Regulation system. The Commissioner also exercises supervision through a Political Agent over the semi-independent Raja of Hill-Tippera. In 1863-4 the official staff comprised the Commissioner, Judge, Additional Judge, Magistrate-Collector, Joint-Magistrate, Supt. of Hill-Tracts, and two Assistants, all covenanted civilians; a Deputy-Inspector-General, District and Assistant Supt. of Police; a Civil Surgeon; and Collector of Customs who was also Harbour Master. These were the principal civil officials. The military was represented by a wing of the 38th Native Infantry, with five officers, including the doctor. Trade was then unimportant, and tea-planting quite in its infancy: there was scarcely a single non-official who could be socially classed as a resident.

Besides the Europeans, there was a coloured contingent of half-castes of all shades, from whitey-brown to deep mahogany, many with aristocratic names, as Vaz, Gomez, Pereira, Rebeiro, &c., descendants of the Portuguese adventurers who settled long ago around the north-east corner of the Bay of Bengal, and whose turbulent character and lawless habits gave much trouble to the Moghul Government. These *Kala Feringhees* or "black Europeans" as they are called by the natives now occupy a humble position, and are looked down upon as an inferior race alike by Mahomedans and Hindoos. Some of them are darker than many pure-blooded natives. They are Romanists, and have a Cathedral near the river.

One of the first duties of a new-comer is to call on everybody—no small undertaking in a place like Chittagong, with houses perched on the tops of hills, many with long and steep ascents. It being impossible to drive up such places, and some being steep even for riding, people use a sort of sedan chair called *tonjon*, carried by four men like a palki. The best sort is fitted with venetians, and over the top has an extra cover of bamboo matting to keep off the sun. Some tonjons are open at the sides: the body of an old buggy even may be fitted with poles, and turned into one of these machines. Most of the residents had their tonjon standing in the verandah: the bearers when not wanted to carry it worked as punkah wallahs or garden coolies.

The number of people to be called on was not small; and for a day

or two my tonjon bearers had no easy time, trotting about up and down hills all over the place, and no doubt were glad (as I was) when the business was finished. My new acquaintances seemed a pleasant lot of people. Excepting the Supt. of Hill Tracts and the other Assistant, who were "competition wallahs" like myself, all the civilians were Haileybury men. The Commissioner was rather beyond the ken of a junior Assistant, but showed himself a considerate chief in official matters, courteous and hospitable in private life. Mrs. Gordon Y— had been a belle, and was still strikingly handsome. Belfort, the Judge, had plenty to do in office, judicial work at Chittagong being notoriously heavy, and we did not see much of him, but his wife was immensely popular. She was the life and soul of the station, and had a pleasant word for all. The Judge's hospitable bungalow was the general rendezvous on croquet-nights, and on stated mornings for *chota haziri* or early breakfast, to which there was a standing invitation to all who liked to go. Our Collector, a jovial bachelor, though no light weight was very active—rode and played rackets; kept a hospitable and well-appointed house, and had his own boat, a sea-going yawl, for touring in the interior of the district, which, being a long narrow strip between the Hill Tracts and the sea, necessitated much travelling by water. Dr. Wiseman, the Civil Surgeon, had seen service in the Mutiny, was fond of his profession, and enjoyed the confidence and respect of Europeans and natives alike, which is saying a good deal.

The bachelors of the regiment were Lieuts. Fergus G— and Finsbury, who lived together at the Mess. The other officers were married. I chummed with Wilkinson, the other Assistant, and M'Gilpin had a room in our house when in the station, but was a bird of passage, his headquarters being at Chandergona in the Hills, some miles up the river.

The bath at Chittagong was a great institution, and there was generally a large attendance in the early morning. The chief amusement was to ride on *mussucks*, or goat-skins used by *bheesties* for carrying water. These, being inflated, were as buoyant as possible, floating about like shapeless balloons. To mount was not easy,—to stick on still harder. It was fine to watch a beginner kicking and splashing in his frantic efforts to climb on, and, just as he succeeded,

to see him roll off on the other side, while the *mussuck* with a dive and rebound went bobbing away as if it enjoyed the joke. The practised rider, on the other hand, would get up without any fuss, and sit calmly balancing, like Arion on his dolphin. Some of the bathers wore wire nose-clips to keep the water out, hung round the neck like eye-glasses, which made them look very comical.

Four nights a week were devoted to rackets, two to croquet. The racket-court, an old building, dating probably from the time when Chittagong was an important military station, had no back-wall; and during a match the non-players would sit out at the back of the court watching the game. Some people might have called this slow; but it is something to have rackets at all, and we were well content. The ladies having yielded so much to the racket-court, the gentlemen could not do less than be regular in their attendance at croquet. A hill between those occupied by the houses of the Commissioner and the Judge, and connected with both by narrow ridges, made a good ground, covered with fine turf: a low bamboo railing kept the balls from rolling down the hill. The croquet-ground belonged to the Judge's hill, and the Belforts were hosts on these occasions, when coffee was handed, and play continued as long as there was light. Sometimes for a very exciting finish lanterns were produced.

There was plenty of jungle in and about Chittagong, and two tigers were brought in for the Government reward within a week while I was there. One of the prettiest roads in the station, broad and winding between the hills—a capital place for an early blow, as it debouched towards the sea—was called the “Tiger Pass.” Then there was the “Leopard Pass,” where a lame leopard was said to prowl till somebody shot him. Shortly before I joined, a tiger got right into the bazaar, not far from the river. He mauled one or two natives (one lost his foot, and became afterwards a privileged beggar, hopping about with a crutch), and was at last shot in a culvert under the road, by a party of ships' captains and other Europeans, who had taken the field against him. Jungle-fowl and snipe were within easy reach, and one evening a deer was barking near the racket-court.

The Christmas week brought guests from the neighbouring stations of Comilla and Noacolly: the Christmas dinner was given by the Judge,

and everybody was there. Turkey and ham are required on these occasions, and no housewife with any regard for her reputation would consider a Christmas feast complete without these, which must be imported if not locally procurable. I remember some time afterwards, when stationed at Dacca, being asked by a lady at Sylhet to get her a turkey as they were not to be had there, and a good long price she had to pay for it. At Chittagong there was no such difficulty. Turkeys were plentiful and cheap, being kept, with pigs and fowls, by the black Portuguese or *Kala Feringhees* above mentioned. The birds thrive on the sandy soil of Chittagong, as do other kinds of poultry. The genuine Chittagong fowls—a long-legged variety something like Cochin Chinas—are much prized. After dinner a scratch dance was got up; and a few days later the Collector gave a ball, which was a great success: thus the festive season was duly honoured.

My official duties were not heavy at first, nor my magisterial powers large, being limited to the infliction of a month's imprisonment, and fine up to Rs. 50. The first time I held Cutcherry¹ I understood little or nothing of what was going on. One of the Magistrate's clerks who knew English acted as interpreter: when he was called away it was like groping in the dark. My court-house was not an imposing edifice: the main building being too small to accommodate the whole staff, some of the subordinate magistrates, myself included, occupied small detached bamboo huts, which in this part of the country are used to supplement the masonry buildings, where these do not suffice. The furniture comprised a table and chair for the presiding officer, a couple of benches for the *amlah* or clerks of the court, and wooden platforms called *takhtaposhes* for apprentices or copyists, who copy the orders and other written proceedings which go to make up the record of a case. A Police constable was told off to my court to have charge of the prisoners, and one or two *mukhtars* (native attorneys who plead in minor cases) attended in the interests of their clients. The cases were of the most petty description,—trifling assault, verbal abuse and such like.

One day I had to see cloth given out to the prisoners at

¹ Hindustani *Kachāhri*: a court-house. Also applied to a landholder's office for the collection of rents, &c.

the Jail, a yard or two being issued to each to use as a wrap. The Jailor superintended the business, with a subordinate who checked the names off a list. The convicts squatted in rows on the ground, and a prisoner carrying the cloth on his head accompanied the Jailor. Some of the recipients were very critical, examining the material closely, and holding it up to the light to see the texture. This was my first visit to an Indian jail. Juniors are often told off for miscellaneous work like this, which, while requiring mere supervision, accustoms them to deal with natives and initiates them into some of the various duties of a Magistrate and Collector.

1864.

January 1st was celebrated by a hockey match on the parade-ground—Chittagong v. the World, the latter represented by the visitors. In the evening there was a dance at the Commissioner's, which considering the paucity of ladies went off very well.

Dissipation is catching, and on the 5th the "Wallahs" gave a picnic. The site selected was a pretty hill on the outskirts of the station, formerly occupied by a house, of which the foundations alone remained. This hill had one high peak commanding a lovely view over the river and low country, with the mountains beyond, and on the other side a bit of the sea. From this peak a ridge descended to the lower part of the hill, which spread out into a level plateau of smooth turf, shaded by "casuarinas," a tree rather like a fir, which is found at most Bengal stations, but not as a rule elsewhere, so is probably not indigenous. This made a capital croquet and dancing lawn. Tents were pitched, and the musicians of the regiment attended. After tiffin the company adjourned for croquet, Aunt Sally, knock'em down, and other pastimes; and as the shades of evening fell, we danced on the green. Finally, most of the guests having left, the rest of us walked home in a body, singing "Three Blind Mice" and other popular ditties.

There was then no club at Chittagong, but the Mess afforded a pleasant lounge for a smoke, to see the papers, or try the contents of a cask of draught beer that was always on tap. The evenings were variously occupied. Croquet was a fixture, but rackets was rather a

hot-weather game, and just now the court was under repair. The more enterprising residents, ladies and gentlemen, would sometimes assemble for an evening walk, and in a body explore the less frequented roads and by-ways of the station. One of these was "Flora's Path,"—a beautiful grassy walk or bridle-path connecting two of the station roads by a track through the hills. Tradition is silent as to the origin of this romantic name; but it fitted well so charming a spot. Riding here one evening I saw a small grey beast going slowly up a grassy glade off the path. It cried plaintively when caught, but made no resistance. I took it home wrapped in my coat, but next day found it dead, so it must have had something the matter with it, which would account for its being caught so easily. It was an Indian badger, called *baloo-soor* (sand-pig) by the natives, with long nose, snout like a pig, powerful digging claws, and short tail,—not unlike its European brother. Later on I had another encounter in "Flora's Path," with a bigger beast than a badger.

The Calcutta steamer of the 24th January brought two additions to our society—Col. Boyle to take command of the regiment, hitherto held by a captain, and the new *padre* (chaplain), Rev. Cave H——. Other changes followed. The Joint Magistrate and his wife went home on "urgent private affairs," and the Judge's wife went in the same ship. Her departure was a great loss to the station, and still greater to her husband, for they had never been separated since their marriage, fifteen years before. My chum Wilkinson took the Joint Magistrate's house, and I was left alone. Another social loss was the transfer of Lient. Finsbury with a detachment of sepoy to Kasalong, a frontier post up the river, to overawe the Kookies, a hill-tribe who had been giving trouble. I too was fated to join in the exodus. Smith, the Assistant at Comilla, having applied for leave, Wilkinson was ordered to relieve him, much to his disgust, being just comfortably settled in his new house, one of the snuggest little bungalows in the place. I liked Chittagong, but had no particular reason for objecting to a move, and the end of it was that we were allowed to exchange appointments, so I packed up my traps, left my *ppcs* and prepared to march.

CHAPTER V.

COMILLA. 1864.

THE route from Chittagong to Comilla is along the Dacca Trunk Road, which runs N.N.W. parallel to the coast, as far as the Fenny River.¹ Hills skirt the road to the east, rising at Seetakoond, twenty-three miles north of Chittagong, to a height of some 1,100 feet. In this neighbourhood inflammable gas issues from the ground at several points,—a natural phenomenon that of course renders the place holy, and pilgrims resort to the shrine of Seetakoond, which, like that at Budhgáya, is in charge of a Mahant. The distance from Chittagong to Comilla is ninety-three miles, and there was a staging bungalow at Zorawulgunge, three miles south of the Fenny, which is about half-way. I left Chittagong on the 20th February, and halted that night at Zorawulgunge, being helped so far on my way with horses lent by friends. Next morning I crossed the Fenny, and was in doubt how I should manage, having now only my own little “Dick” and the still tinier “Xit,” both good beasts, but not accustomed to do forty odd miles in a day between them. I had written to Smith at Comilla, asking to be helped over the last two stages, but had not got his reply. North of the river there was much less traffic than on the south, where the Noacolly road comes in, and brings many carts—so that for miles and miles it was a lovely grass road, smooth and soft, and moreover there were no shaky wooden bridges as between Chittagong and the Fenny. From this river the coast-line trends away westward to the mouth of the Megna, forming the sea-face of the Noacolly district, the road keeping straight for Comilla, still skirted to the eastward by hills, which however are not so high as

¹ Probably *Pheni*, from *phen*, “foam.” The Assam-Bengal Railway is now making great changes in these parts.

further south. "Diek" and "Xit" carried me well to within ten miles of my destination, where I found a pony awaiting me, with a note from Smith and some prog, which after a long ride was very acceptable. The pony was fresh and soon brought me to his owner's bungalow, where I was hospitably received.

Comilla was then a pretty little station on the south or left bank of the Goomtee.¹ The native bazaar, well laid out, extended along both sides of a wide road shaded by fine trees, beyond which lay the Circuit-house, Cutcheries, and European quarter. The officials were the Collector-Magistrate, Judge, Superintendent of Survey, Joint Magistrate, and two Assistants, all civilians; the District Superintendent of Police and his Assistant, Civil Surgeon, Deputy Collectors, and other officers of lower rank. A colony of French zemindars, or landowners, contributed a non-official element that was wanting at Chittagong. There was also the European agent of the Raja of Hill Tippera, who, in addition to his territory over the border, owns a large and valuable estate within the Tippera district.

The day after arrival I was sworn in as Assistant at the Collector's office, a formality that is now dispensed with. Ross Mangles, the Collector of Tippera, was one of the two V.C.'s in the Bengal Civil Service, the other being MacDonell, afterwards Judge of the High Court; and both crosses were won in the Mutiny, during the first attempt to relieve the gallant little garrison of the House at Arrah. Mangles carried off a wounded soldier from under fire; and MacDonell jumped out of a boat carrying some of the relief party, which was tied to the bank and in that position exposed to the fire of the mutineers, cut the rope in a shower of bullets, and so enabled the crew to carry the vessel out of range.

For a time I did not know much of Mangles. There was a split in the station society, which at the time of my arrival was divided into opposite factions—Montagus and Capulets—one headed by Swindon the Judge, the other captained by my worthy chief.² I had made Swindon's

¹ Signifying the winding river, from the Sanskrit root *gum*. The Goomtee is a decided twister.

² The story goes that, at a station in like case, a peace-maker once invited every one to dinner, hoping to heal the breach. When the feast was announced, each guest *took in his own wife*.

acquaintance during the Christmas week at Chittagong, and he was very civil to me when I got to Comilla, so at first I was as it were accredited to the enemy's camp. Fielding the Joint followed the Judge's banner, while Brownlow the Superintendent of Survey joined forces with the Collector. The rest of us tried to be neutral. I got to know Mangles better after joining the station bobbery pack which he hunted, and soon found that he was a very good fellow, though rather hot-tempered. He gave me plenty of opportunities of learning my work ; and as time went on I had no reason to regret my change of station.

Smith the second Assistant having gone on leave when I joined, my principal chum was Peart the Police Assistant, a young fellow who having seen some rough life in the merchant service was no doubt glad to exchange it for a berth on shore. One morning, being a holiday, he and I with Fielding planned a trip to the Mynamuttee or Lálmye Hills, an isolated offshoot of the Tippera Hills, through which the Dacca Road passes, a mile or two west of Comilla. In these hills, near the Government Road, stood the Mynamuttee Bungalow belonging to the Tippera Raja, a pretty place, convenient for picnics, and here we were to meet after shooting. We loaded our guns and struck into the jungle, meaning to keep in line as near as possible ; but the jungle was dense, we soon lost each other, and I had not the least idea where I was going. My doubts were presently solved : emerging from the cover I found myself exactly where I had started, as was clear from a torn cartridge-paper belonging to my Terry carbine, thrown down after loading at the edge of the jungle. This result was curious, as supporting the theory that people who lose their way go round in a circle, but otherwise unsatisfactory. I took a fresh line and struck into a beaten track, which by the merest chance brought me up with Peart, who had lost his way also. So we went on together, and after a long tramp reached the bungalow, where we found Fielding with the tiffin spread out under a tree, puzzled at our non-appearance and wistfully eyeing the feast, for he was very hungry, but did not like to begin without us. We soon made up for lost time.

On Easter Sunday, our morning ride led us to a place on the river above Comilla called Bibi Hát,¹ close to the hills, where a Survey party

¹ The Lady's Market.

were encamped with tents and elephants, a beautiful grass road all the way. These grass roads were quite a feature of Comilla, and formed a continuous circuit all round the station, by following which it was possible to have an eight or ten-mile ride on fine springy turf. After breakfast I got my two chuprassis to talk to me in Bengali,¹ as a preparation for the colloquial test in the coming examination.

Orderly peons, or chuprassis, take their name from the brass badge (*chaprass*) which is worn at the waist, engraved with the bearer's number and the style and title of the office to which he belongs. These men are paid by Government, but attached as personal servants to heads of offices—the Commissioner, Judge, Collector, &c., as the case may be. No office is complete without chuprassis, and the number allotted to each official increases with his rank; an Assistant or Deputy Magistrate may have one or at most two, the District Magistrate-Collector will have five or six or more, and so on. Their ostensible duty is to carry letters, &c., and attend their masters in office; but they are employed in various ways, especially in a married man's household. One perhaps shows talent for tailoring, and works as a *dirzi*; another, handy with children, is told off to help the ayah. It is sometimes mentioned in a chuprassi's "chit," or written character, that he is a good "lady's chuprassi." In my own experience one chuprassi would be a capital bearer in camp; another knew a bit about cooking; another could manage the ice-machine; and one was employed to clean guns, look after the ammunition, scour the country for news of game, and accompany me out shooting. The number of these attendants has been reduced of late years, but the allowance, considering the nature of their *official* duties, is still liberal. Their pay is small, but the appointments are much sought after, and the advantages expected are perhaps not limited to the receipt of salary.

Towards evening two natives brought news of a "kill" near Bibi Hát, so I rode out with my guns to the spot where the carcass was

¹ Urdu or Hindustani is the language used to communicate with servants, even where Bengali is spoken by the people. Among themselves servants may talk Bengali, but in speaking to Europeans they glide into Hindustani as the politer tongue. It would not occur to chuprassis to address their master in Bengali, unless told to do so.

lying—a very jungly place surrounded by low hills—and sat behind a screen of boughs till it was too dark to see, but nothing came.

On the 1st of April I started after dinner for Chittagong to attend the examination, having borrowed a horse for the first stage, and sent my own two on. It was a stormy night, dark as Erebus, and at starting I fairly lost my bearings, but once clear of the station there was just enough light to see the shimmering surface of the open road, while at intervals a flash of lightning made everything bright as day. Presently the clouds cleared, the stars shone out, and there was no further difficulty from the darkness. I was badly horsed, having only three for the whole forty-six miles to the Fenny. “Xit” was good for ten miles, but the lion’s share of the duty fell to “Dick,” who had to do some twenty-four. It was weary work riding slowly in the dark, and more than once I felt inclined to get off and lie down for a snooze by the roadside. Morning dawned as I neared the river, and right welcome was the daylight; drowsiness vanished with the darkness, and across the river I found Wilkinson’s pony from Chittagong, which soon took me to Zorawnlungge. After breakfast I again pushed on, and at Seetakoond caught up my friend Peart, who had left Comilla some hours before me, but gained nothing by the start, having had to sleep at the Assistant Engineer’s bungalow and wait for more horses. The Engineer was hospitality itself, and gave us a second breakfast, which did not come amiss after a long ride. It was a glorious afternoon, and being provided with fresh horses we rode gaily along, complacently thinking of the travelling allowance at eight annas (in those days a shilling) a mile that we should draw for this pleasant excursion. We reached Chittagong about 5 o’clock, riding in through “Flora’s Path,” which I wanted Peart to see and admire.

The next day was Sunday: in the morning we had a dip in the “Fairies’ Lake,” and there was tiffin at the Collector’s hospitable bungalow at which several of the examinees attended. After church we went to see a batch of newly-caught elephants just brought down from the hills. They were tied to trees with strong ropes, and seemed pretty quiet, though at first they had been very noisy, roaring and trumpeting in the night. Two little calves were allowed to be loose; and very comical they looked poking about, and cocking their tiny trunks in the most

inquisitive manner. One half-grown tusker was being taken for a wash in a tank close by, and strongly objected to the proceeding. A stout rope round his neck was made fast to a powerful tame elephant, who towed him along in spite of his vigorous struggles. At the water side the young savage became still more obstreperous, and at last the old gentleman lost patience, and raising his trunk in a threatening manner, fairly roared his charge into submission. The sagacity of the tame animal was wonderful; he seemed to know exactly what to do, and it was amusing to watch his management of the unruly youngster, like a nurse with a fractions child.

The examination began next day at the Commissioner's office, and diverse were the candidates in nationality, complexion and age, from the fresh-coloured young Assistant to the middle-aged native Deputy, brown and wizened. There was also variety in costume,—the natives wearing coloured turbans with spotless *chupkuns* (close tunics) and scarves of fine muslin thrown round the chest; the Police Assistant in the neat dark-blue patrol jacket of the Constabulary, and others in ordinary civilian dress. The subjects for examination were law and language. In the former, examinees were expected to have a fair knowledge of the Penal and Criminal Procedure Codes and other laws with which magistrates have to deal; also of the old Regulations and modern Acts that relate to the Revenue administration. In the latter, they had to show that they could read, write, translate and talk the languages (Hindustani and Bengali) current in the Lower Provinces, something more being required here than would have sufficed for a pass "in College" in Calcutta. The examinees' command of language was tested in conversation, first with an educated native, then with a man of lower class; also by making a native clerk write from his dictation. Particulars of two cases, one a rent suit the other arising out of a criminal charge, being read out, a decision had to be written in each. The Commissioner, Judge, and Collector were the examiners, with one or two native officers. On this occasion, owing to some mistake, the papers were not received in time, so we had only the *virt roce* subjects, and next day a circular came round from the Commissioner saying that there could be no further examination, and that we were all to return to our stations. This was disappointing; Peart and I were at the Mess with



Lieutenant G——, anticipating a pleasant time. But orders must be obeyed; so I paid a few calls, put in an appearance at croquet, got as many games of rackets as possible, and was back at Comilla within the week.

As already mentioned, Comilla had a bobbery pack, a run with which was a frequent morning's amusement. Our Collector was M.F.H., and the Superintendent of Survey, Joseph Delaval the sporting son of a French zemindar, and sometimes Peart and myself made up the field. The game pursued was as various as the breed of dogs composing the pack—jackal, fox, or *bágdás* (civet cat), nothing came amiss if it could only run; and once the dogs were consoled for a blank day by being let go at cats in the bazaar, a little terrier being put up on the roof of one of the huts, where he cleverly pursued Grimalkin from one house-top to another. Pussy must have been disgusted at finding herself confronted with her natural enemy in this lofty and (as she may have thought) secure position. Monsieur Joseph was a keen sportsman, and well-mounted; he had a grey Arab supposed to be about twenty years old, still very handsome, and full of spirit.

On the 1st of May, Smith rejoined as second Assistant on expiry of his leave, and came to live with me in his old bungalow. A few days after, news was brought of two cows killed in the jungle; but we expected guests to dinner, so I could not go till the next afternoon. The carcasses were lying close together in the jungly hills beyond Bibi Hát, not far from the scene of the last “kill.” I sat as long as there was light, but again without success. It was rather tedious sitting still through the hot afternoon, listening to the monotonous whizzing and buzzing made by a kind of tree-cricket found in these jungles. The noise, intensified by the surrounding stillness, was loud and constant, something like a spinning-machine at work: it never ceased till evening. On my return I was hailed from more than one native hut with the query: “*Bágh gira?*” (Has the tiger fallen?) Would that I could have replied in the affirmative!

On the 14th May a circular came round saying that fresh papers had been set, and would be sent to all stations in the Chittagong Division, where the examination would be completed, so as to save candidates a second journey to the Commissioner's headquarters. This was a startler

to me, as I had relaxed in my preparation, imagining (the wish being perhaps father to the thought) that there would be no more examination till the next half-yearly one about October. There was still a fortnight left however, so matters were not quite hopeless. The examination was held in the Circuit-house, and Swindon with Fielding presided and gave out the papers. It lasted two days, and before going in I was put through my facings *riwâ roce* by my chum Smith, who had seen service and good-naturedly gave me the benefit of his experience. In the dictation, the native clerk, though supposed to write down exactly what the examinee said, threw out hints and made sundry suggestions (aided and abetted by old Swindon) which were of great service. The result was that I passed, much to my delight, though the news did not reach me for more than a month afterwards. This was the test by the Lower Standard. The Higher Standard remained to be got over before attaining freedom from further examination.

The Whipping Act had lately come into force as an addendum to the Penal Code, and prescribed whipping as an alternative or additional punishment for theft and other specified offences. I never could quite see the connection between flogging and stealing, nor appreciate the fitness of the punishment for the crime. For robbery with violence or any brutal outrage no penalty could be more appropriate, but it seemed hardly suitable in many cases for which it was now legalised, especially where the act might amount to mere *technical* theft. And looking to the extreme prevalence of false charges in Bengal, there was risk of grave injustice in allowing the infliction by subordinate Courts of sentences that could not be altered on appeal. A man wrongfully fined or imprisoned may get redress from the appellate Court, but he cannot be *unflogged*; and, deservedly or not, the stigma of such a punishment sticks to him for ever. However, there was the law; and the first time I saw it enforced was at Comilla. A constable of the new Police¹ had been convicted of stealing mangoes in the Circuit-house² compound.

¹ The Indian Police was remodelled by Act V. of 1861.

² A Government building maintained for the accommodation of public officers on tour, and in which officials are sometimes allowed to live for a time (paying rent to Government) if private houses are not available. Circuit-houses are also utilised for other public purposes. A room in that at Comilla was appropriately furnished and set apart for Divine service, there being no church at the station.

and Smith had sentenced him to twenty-four stripes, thirty being the maximum allowed. Punishment was inflicted by the jail jemadar or head-warder, who laid on vigorously, and perhaps enjoyed licking one belonging to a rival branch of the service, there being some jealousy between the Police and Jail Departments. The instrument used is not a whip, but a rattan cane, which deftly handled cuts fearfully, and in the hands of an expert flogger may draw blood in one or two strokes. The man fainted (or shammed) at the fourteenth, and punishment was stayed at the twenty-first stroke. A medical officer must always first certify that the man sentenced is fit to undergo the flogging, which is inflicted in his presence and that of a magistrate.

The 24th May being Her Majesty's Birthday, was celebrated by a Bachelors' Ball at the Circuit-house, the Judge and District Superintendent of Police, whose wives were at home, being classed as bachelors *pro tem.* and included among the promoters. The decorations were very pretty. Over the entrance was an evergreen arch with the word WELCOME illuminated; the rooms were adorned with garlands and stars of bayonets (from the Police armoury); and GOD SAVE THE QUEEN was also done in evergreens. Supper was laid out in tents in the compound, and a dancing cloth stretched over the ball-room floor. A fiddler had been imported from Dacca, and there was a local piano. All things considered, the entertainment was a success. Speeches followed supper, and I was in terror at the idea of having to return thanks for the ladies, which however was done by our worthy Joint. As a married man, his assumption of the duty was perhaps not strictly correct, but I was none the less grateful to him for undertaking it.

Some Indian horses are incurably vicious, and an instance of this occurred at Comilla. A horse belonging to the head-master of the Government School was being led along by a grass-cutter when it suddenly attacked and got him down, seized him by the arm and worried him savagely, breaking both bones, so that the limb had to be amputated. The brute was beaten off with bamboos. Animals like this are appropriately termed "man-eaters"; some are in other respects useful horses, but require cautious handling, and must always be a source of danger to those about them. Another queer-tempered beast was a Waler that had to be blindfolded for his master to mount. He objected to

Europeans, but was quiet enough with his own syce. This dislike of white people shows itself in other animals, notably paria dogs and village buffaloes, who seem to have an instinctive aversion to a fair skin.

Smith had a great sense of humour, and one day the idea occurred to him to have a Beauty Show of our servants,—some twenty or thirty,—the prize to be given to the ugliest. Our Doctor, Greening, was chosen as the Paris to award the apple, and the competitors were drawn up in line in the compound for his inspection. After due deliberation, he gave the palm to the *masalchi* or scullion, who certainly was hideous enough in all conscience, though one or two of the others ran him pretty close, notably Smith's bearer, an Uriya (Orissa man), tall and scraggy, of extreme ugliness. Whether the winner felt gratified at the distinction I cannot say—anyhow he got the prize of Rs. 3, or about half a month's pay. My bearer told me afterwards that he was much ashamed, and that the other servants were chaffing him unmercifully. No doubt they made the most of the joke against him; perhaps feeling a little envious too, for natives are as fond of money as their neighbours.

East of Comilla, bordering the hills, was a broad expanse of *jhcel* or marsh, where at this season was deep water, overgrown with long grass and reeds, affording cover for numerous kinds of water-fowl. It was too early for the migratory birds, which come as in England at the approach of winter. But some varieties remain and breed in India, and among these may be mentioned the whistling teal, a coarse, scraggy bird of a red-brown colour, and the cotton teal, scientifically classed as a *goose*, a plump little fellow very good for the table,—the drake almost black and white and the duck a sort of ash-colour. The natives call it "*Pek-perra*," and the British soldier "*Fix baggonets*,"—the name in each case being suggested by a fancied resemblance to the bird's cry. It is swift on the wing, and takes a quick shot to bring down. These birds, though web-footed, build in trees, and are found in Bengal throughout the year. Also the purple coot, called *kālim* by the natives, like a large blue moorhen with red callosities on the head, and legs of the same colour; the Chinese jacana (*chetarbilai*) or water-pheasant, a bird that mews like a cat, with long tail-feathers, dark brown and white, and spurs on the wing-joints; and another called the *khora*, in shape not

unlike the blue coot, but dark brown with yellow head-wattles and legs,—a very game bird, trained to fight by the natives and good for the table,—whose deep booming note is unmistakable when heard in the marshes. The last three, and another smaller water-hen with short tail (*pipoi*), have long spreading claws, which enable them to run without sinking over the broad leaves of lotus and other aquatic plants that cover the water. To this *jheel* I often went with my gun, and one day a native Phenza Gazi offered himself as *shikari*, having been employed in that capacity by the late Joint Magistrate. I engaged him at Rs. 4 a month, to get news of game and accompany me shooting. The craft used in the marshes is a *kunda* or narrow dug-out canoe, in the forepart of which the sportsman sits, while two men pole it along. The gunner thus gets every chance of a fair shot at anything that may get up; but even when birds are hit they are not always picked up, being great divers, while the reeds and grass make retrieving difficult.

Our house contained no such menagerie as at Barrackpore, but we had one or two pets. “Muggins” was a young sambur, as tame as a calf and about the same size, that had been caught in the Mynamuttee Hills. He lived in a bamboo enclosure in the compound with “Skittles,” a little barking deer, and two monkeys. In the heat of the day the deer would take shelter among the trees and bushes in the enclosure; at other times “Muggins” would stalk solemnly about, stamping loudly with his fore-feet, his great spoon-shaped ears well cocked, and bushy tail erect like a shaving brush. “Skittles” was more modest and retiring, and walked in the most gingerly way, delicately pointing his tiny toes. It was only on special occasions, *e.g.* when fried potatoes were going, that he so far forgot his manners as to get on his hind-legs and try to help himself unless his wants were promptly supplied. “Skittles” was a pretty little beast, bright chestnut with white belly and white under the tail, which was tucked between his legs except when running;—then at each bound it flew up like a flag, the white lining vividly flashing. A curious mark over each eye gave a sort of supercilious look to his face. “Muggins” was more of a mouse-colour, deepening into black at the legs and tail. Each of the monkeys had a box stuek on a bamboo pole, to which they were fastened with a chain and running ring. I had a bamboo umbrella fixed on top of my monkey’s box, under which he could sit in the shade;

but with a monkey's curiosity and love of mischief he soon pulled it to pieces.

On the 17th July Peart was ordered off to take charge of the Police at the Brahmanbaria Subdivision. Districts in Bengal usually include one or more subdivisions in charge of Joint, Assistant, or Deputy Magistrates. These are subordinate to the District Magistrate, but have power to commence proceedings in cases arising within their jurisdiction, and commit to the Sessions any they cannot themselves dispose of; while appeals from their orders lie mostly to the Judge, so that judicially they are to some extent independent of the Magistrate. In administrative matters, too, though subject to the Magistrate's general control, they, of course, take the initiative and act largely on their own judgment: in this way the subdivisinal system gives great relief to the chief executive officer, who might otherwise be overburdened with details. In large districts there may be two or more subdivisions; in Tippera there was one only, that of Brahmanbaria or Nassirnugger, to which Peart was now transferred.

One of our Deputy Collectors having obtained a month's leave, the Collector ordered me to take over the Treasury, of which Mr. Barbour had been in charge. This duty is generally entrusted to a Deputy Collector of the Uneovenanted (subordinate executive) service, the work involved being mere routine, requiring no special ability, but care, method, and vigilance. I took charge on the 30th July, after a long interview with Mr. Barbour in the Treasury strong room, examining the stock of currency notes, coin, stamps and other valuables, including opium,¹ which costly drug is kept in Government Treasuries, under the same custody as the cash. Treasury work at Comilla was not heavy. The books were written up and ready for signature on my way to Cutcherry in the morning; and on leaving office in the afternoon I looked in again at the Treasury, to see if there was any money to put away. But, whether there was much or little to do, it was always necessary to go to the Treasury, and this made the duty rather irksome.

¹ Opium, the coagulated juice of a large white poppy, is a Government monopoly. The plant is grown under official supervision on a system of advances made to the cultivators, and the drug is prepared and stored in Government factories. The bulk of the produce is sold by auction in Calcutta and exported to China; but a quantity is reserved for home consumption, and a stock of opium is kept in all Government treasuries.

The coin is kept, with currency notes, stamps and other valuables, in strong chests or presses, under double locks—one key being with the Treasurer, usually a native who gives heavy security, the other with the Treasury Officer, as the Deputy Collector in charge is called. The Treasurer is allowed to retain in his own hands a certain amount of cash, notes, stamps, and opium for current requirements, which is strictly limited, and anything in excess of this must be put under the joint charge of the Deputy Collector and himself. So whenever treasure has to be issued or put away, both officers must be present; for each keeps his set of keys in his own personal custody, and without both sets no receptacle could be opened. It is also the rule that the strong room (also under double locks) may not be opened except in presence of the Head Constable of Police, or officer commanding the guard that is attached to every treasury, whose further duty it is to see that the strong room is again securely locked when the business is finished. When rupees are to be put away, having first been counted by subordinate clerks, they are weighed in large scales, Rs.1,000 at a time, and put into gunny (jute fibre), or strong net bags, a slip of paper bearing the number of rupees, and signed by the Treasurer or Treasury Officer, being deposited in each bag. Smaller coins are weighed in smaller quantities, and, when necessary, amounts are further tested by counting in the Treasury Officer's presence. The bags are then placed in the strong boxes, and locked up. All this is not very interesting; but it is well for a young Assistant to have some experience of Treasury work; for sooner or later, when in charge of a subdivision or advanced to the dignity of a Collector, with his own Treasury and Treasury Officer under him, he will find it useful.

At some treasuries more money is collected than is needed for local purposes, while at others the reverse is the case. Thus money has often to be sent from one treasury to another, and during the month I had charge at Comilla orders came to remit $1\frac{3}{4}$ lakhs (Rs.1,75,000, then representing about £17,500) to the Bank of Bengal at Dacca, where money was urgently wanted. The Bank of Bengal in Calcutta corresponds to the Bank of England in London; being the depository of Government balances, and to some extent under Government management. There are branches at most of the large stations up country, Dacca among others.

My duty was to superintend the packing and despatch of the coin, which being all silver was rather bulky. Strong iron-bound boxes were provided, each to hold five bags of Rs.1,000, Rs.5,000 in every box. These having been screwed down, packed in gunny sacking, corded, labelled, and sealed, were loaded up on bullock carts and taken to the *ghât* or landing place by the river, where boats were ready to receive the treasure. A Police guard of ten or twelve men formed the escort, and I rode down on little "Xit" to see the cargo safely on board. On the way one of the cart bullocks became unruly, and made a rush down the slope of the embanked road: the cart was luckily brought up by the trunk of a tree growing by the roadside, so an upset was avoided; it was put straight again, and the refractory bullock got under control, a man being told off to lead it with a rope. We reached the *ghât* without further mishap, and the boxes were deposited in the hold of the largest boat, a coil of rope with bamboo float attached being fastened to each box. This is done in case the boat should sink—no improbable contingency in the big rivers of Eastern Bengal during the stormy season—when the bamboos would float, and the boxes could be recovered by diving. No such accident happened on this occasion, and on the 1st September Mr. Barbour returning from leave resumed charge of the Treasury.

I made frequent excursions in the neighbourhood of the station, usually to the *jheel* already mentioned at foot of the eastern hills. But shooting in the *jheel* did not long content me, and my wanderings extended to the hills beyond, where, besides being on land instead of cramped up in a canoe, I might expect to find greater variety of game. We never got much; but these rambles were very enjoyable. The freedom of the woods was delightful, and there was always the chance of bringing something to book. "Hope springs eternal" &c., and repeated disappointments did not make me lose heart. Game was there, as was evident from footmarks and other signs, and one day I had shots at a barking deer and fawn, but missed both. This was humiliating; but, apart from the disgust at not "scoring," the failure did not affect me deeply. I felt no wish to kill whatever came in my way, and could think of deer and such harmless animals ranging the forest without desiring their destruction. And the jungle was full of life and interest. One day a lovely gold-beetle was found lying in a little stream,

Rescuing Treasure
No. 1-6-55

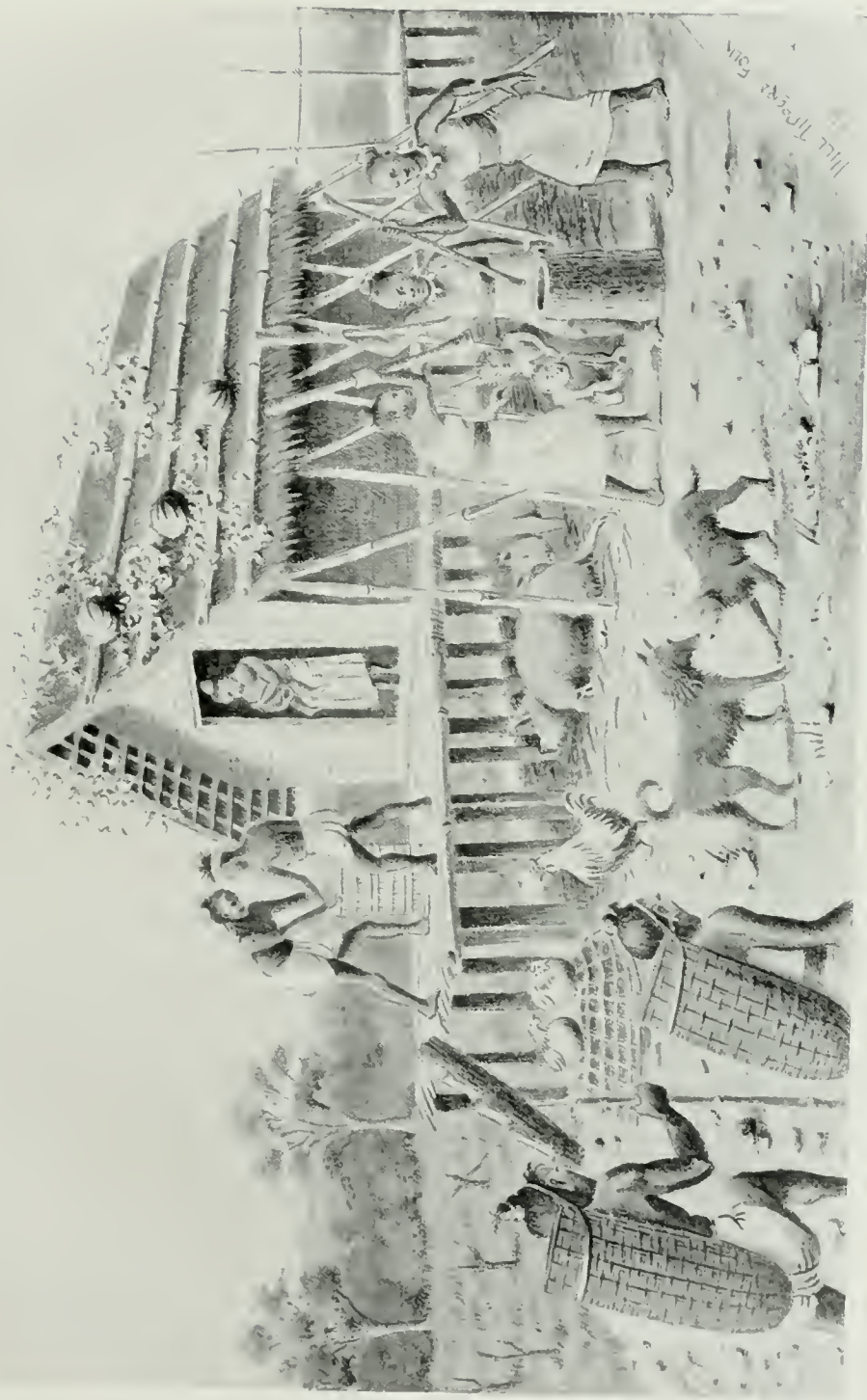


the wing-covers golden green, the body a brilliant metallic rose-colour,—a splendid prize. Twice we came upon a big Hanumán monkey, sitting in a tree like a wild man of the woods, shaking the boughs indignantly at the intruders, and presently vanishing into the leafy depths with long and graceful bounds. Troops of the common *bándar*, or short-tailed monkey, with ruddy posteriors, appeared sometimes and amused us with their antics ; and once we heard the peculiar yelping cry of the Hooluk or Gibbon ape, which inhabits the hills of the north-eastern frontier but is oftener heard than seen, being shy and retiring, and fond of thick tree-jungle. On this occasion, as we were returning, something fell down inside my trousers, which I thought was my knife and did not trouble to look, as my long boots would prevent its falling out. But at home I found a fat leech, that had somehow got in, bitten me on the hip, sucked its fill and fallen off in a state of repletion : my shirt was saturated with blood, and it was difficult to stop the bleeding. Before feeding, these jungle leeches are almost like threads, and not easily seen. They are common in the woods, and are said to poise themselves on end, on bushes skirting the paths, on the look-out for prey. They lie in the grass too, and fasten on animals when grazing, sometimes getting right up the nostrils. Leech-gaiters and stockings are used to protect the legs by those who have to go where these pests abound, but with every precaution they are not always kept out. How this one got inside is a mystery, my boots being drawn over my trousers.

These hills are sparsely inhabited by Tipperas, in villages built on the tops of hills cleared of jungle. This bareness of trees is characteristic of the village sites : perhaps the surroundings are kept clear so as to afford no cover for possible enemies. The huts stand on roomy platforms raised on piles, the space below being devoted to pigs, goats, poultry, &c. The forest affords building materials, among which predominates the indispensable bamboo. This furnishes the framework of the structure, which is strengthened by an arrangement of bamboo stays or flying buttresses, in case of storms. The skeleton of the roof is of bamboos ; the floor is bamboo matting laid over bamboos ; the walls are of split bamboo, with cross battens of the same. *Sunn* or thatching grass, a coarse long-bladed kind excellent for the purpose, grows

plentifully in the hills, and is used to cover the huts, long heavy poles being secured over the thatch, to prevent its being disturbed by the wind. For access to the platform a notched log is placed at a convenient angle, up and down which the paria dogs run like lamplighters. Besides keeping dogs, fowls, goats, and pigs, the hill people also catch and tame the little green long-tailed parroquets so common in Bengal. Both men and women are sturdily built, and being used to climb hills have very stout legs. Their physiognomy is of the Indo-Chinese or Burmese type, quite different from that of the Bengalis. Except in cold weather, the men wear little or nothing but the waist-cloth : the women wear two cloths ; one wrapped tightly round the upper part of the body, confining the bust ; the other round the waist, falling as a short skirt nearly to the knee. The women wear large ear-ornaments, and coils of necklace with coins or amulets as pendants ; both sexes gather the hair into a knot at top or back of the head. The women are regular beasts of burden, but the men do not shirk work, and both carry grain and heavy loads in long baskets on their backs, supported by a thong across the forehead.

Their system of cultivation is primitive. They have neither ploughs nor draught cattle ; indeed, ploughing would be difficult on the steep hill-sides. The ground is cleared by the simple process of cutting down the large trees and burning the rest. This is called *jhooming* and is of course very destructive to the forest, especially as fresh clearings are made every year, the abandoned *jhooms* becoming covered with dense bamboo jungle. In the Hill Tracts of Chittagong attempts have been made to induce the hill-men to take to plough cultivation wherever practicable, and *jhooming* is not allowed in country under the Forest Department. Having cleared his ground, the *jhoomer* (*jhoom* cultivator) takes a supply of seeds in his waist-cloth, and a wooden pricker in his hand with which he makes holes in the ground, drops one or two seeds in each, and leaves the rest to Nature. The principal crops are rice, Indian corn, and cotton (*sutā*) ; rice and cotton being sown in the same holes. With both growing together it would seem difficult to gather the crops ; but I believe only the heads are taken off the rice (the straw being perhaps left, as there is thatching grass in plenty for roofing) and these, standing high, can be plucked without disturbing the



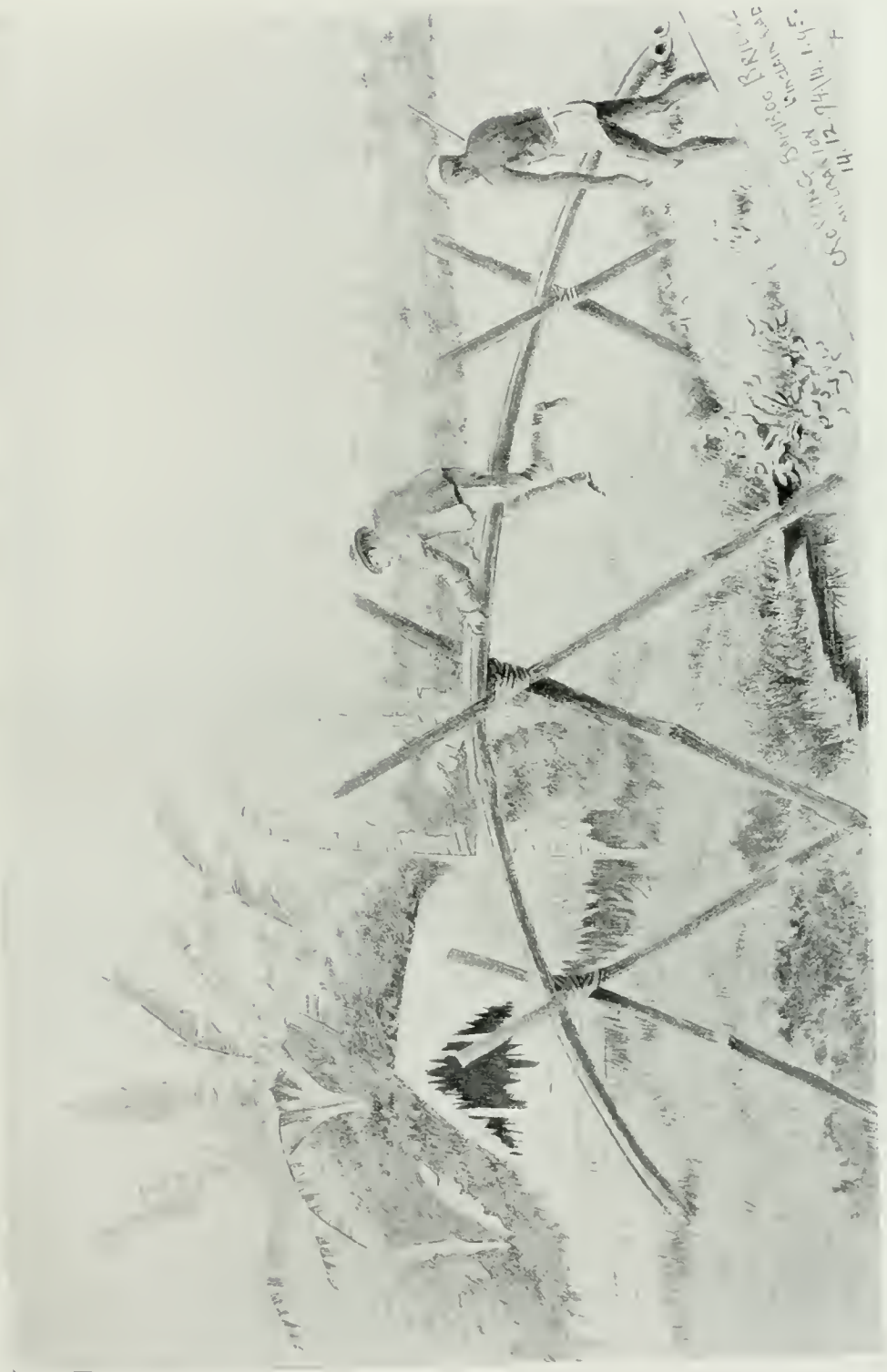
cotton. The hill-rice is of a peculiar kind, the grain larger and when cooked more glutinous than that grown in the plains. Gourds are trained over some of the huts, to which the twining green leaves and tendrils and bright yellow blossoms give a pretty appearance.

The Tipperas are simple folk, but like other semi-savages great drinkers, fond of country spirit and a kind of beer brewed from rice. Visiting one of these villages, we picked up a tall young Tippera, a good-humoured fellow who said he could show us some pigs that came to his *jhooms*. He took up his long basket and walked with us to the fields, but it was too late in the day for wild animals to be about in the open. So we rested near a hut built for sheltering the watchers of the crops,—these *jhooms* being away from the village and exposed to the depredations of deer, monkeys, and pigs. Our guide was in high feather and full of talk: the hill-men have their own language, but those living near the plains can make themselves understood by the Bengalis, with whom they trade. Looking on me perhaps as the representative of Government, and never having heard of any Government but that of John Company, he dubbed me “Koompanie”; with native politeness brought me a log to sit on, stuck it on end, and saying, “Sit down, Koompanie!” laughed heartily at his own wit. I gave him a little brandy from my flask, which he sucked down in a way that showed he could appreciate good liquor, though this must have been much stronger than any he had been accustomed to, for country spirit is generally poor stuff. While I rested and admired the view—the *jhoom* clearings sloping down to a wide expanse of hill and jungle—my shikari Phenza Gazi, a wizened old Mahomedan, was pumping the jovial Tippera for news of game, and left him with strict injunctions to bring word of anything shootable. On the way back Phenza Gazi shot a cock *motoora* or jungle-pheasant,—a handsome bird of a steely blue-black colour with white markings about the tail, crested head and scarlet wattles, and sharp spurs.

About this time changes came in our little society, Fielding being ordered to Mymensingh and replaced by Miller, who held the *pucka* (substantive) appointment of Joint Magistrate of Tippera, but had lately been officiating as District Officer elsewhere. An acting or officiating step as a rule precedes permanent promotion, and a number of men being always absent from their own appointments either on leave or “deputa-

tion," *i.e.*, officiating in some higher capacity, the consequence is that at any given station one or more of the officials is almost sure to be acting for somebody else. In this case the transfer involved the loss of a lady, Fielding being married, while Miller was a bachelor. It also turned us out of our bungalow which belonged to M., and was now wanted for him; but we soon found other quarters.

On the 17th September a native brought word that a cow had been killed near his *bari* (homestead). These *baris* consist of three or four bamboo huts enclosing a courtyard, and in Eastern Bengal are generally buried in a growth of bamboos, plantains, palms, *jak* (bread fruit) trees and other vegetation. One hut is for the women and children; another for the men; a third is used as a cow-house, a fourth for cooking and so on. Some of these homesteads are very neat and well-kept,—the *angina* or inner yard, as well as the floors of the huts (all built on plinths or raised platforms of well consolidated earth), being levelled and *leaped*, that is smeared with a mixture of clay and cow-dung which when dry makes a clean smooth surface. Sending word to my man Phenza Gazi, I cut Cutcherry as short as possible and started. Crossing the river at the Comilla ferry, we struck across country for the hills, and very bad going it was. The rains this year had been very heavy: the *bund* or embankment of the Goomtee had given way near Comilla; the country was flooded, and there was a breach in the Dacca Road. Close to the *bari* of Mozoo, whose cow had been killed, was a watercourse spanned by a primitive bridge made of bamboos placed longitudinally two or three together and tied with cane, extending from bank to bank in the form of a hog's back, supported on trestles of crossed bamboos. In better finished structures a bamboo hand-rail is added: even with this it is ticklish work crossing such a narrow slippery gangway in boots. But this bridge had no rail, so we had to get astride and work across hand over hand. The "kill" was some way off yet; so after resting we struck into the jungle, starting a troop of monkeys that vanished chattering among the trees. It was hard work up and down hill: presently the path ran along a ridge, a steep descent on either side. The cow had apparently been killed at the bottom, dragged up one side of the hill, across the path and down the other. The jungle was dense—tall reeds and grass, through which the trail was plain, the reeds and grass being pressed and



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trampled down, so as to leave a tolerable passage. Into this we turned and followed the track in single file. After nearly slipping down more than once on the steep descent we reached the bottom and found the remains of the cow. Standing here, we once or twice heard a rustling in the bushes but saw nothing; and as it was now getting dark we retraced our steps and made for Mozoo's *bari*. My men made a torch of dry sugar-cane refuse, which burnt capitally; the link-bearer going ahead to show the path. I was glad to get my coat off and dry myself at a fire, for what with perspiration and bushwhacking I was something more than damp. The night was spent at Mozoo's *bari*: our host showed two small heads of sambur and said that the jungle contained peafowl, deer and bears. My couch was a wooden stretcher, but in spite of lively mosquitoes I slept well, being tired out. Next morning revisiting the "kill" we found nothing but a bone. A little way up the hill side the grass was trampled and bits of bone lay about, showing where the feast had been held. A small footmark seemed to indicate that the marauder was a leopard. It must have been a strong one to drag the carcase so far, and over so steep a hill. There had been heavy rain in the night, and the water was out worse than ever as we returned: it was a case of wading through, in one place more than waist-deep.

On the 2nd October Miller rode in to Comilla, just in time to relieve me of a disagreeable duty,—conducting the execution of two men under sentence of death. A magistrate has to be present on these occasions, and the District Magistrate generally deputes a subordinate. Though freed from the duty of superintendence, I thought it well to attend, as there was no telling how soon I might have to preside; and accordingly accompanied Miller to the condemned cell, where the prisoners' fetters were knocked off, and thence to the scaffold. The demeanour of the two men was very different; one in an agony of terror, the other calm or apathetic. When the drop fell the first died almost instantly, but the latter struggled violently, and once got his feet on a cross-piece of the gallows, his arms pinioned at the elbow twitching convulsively.

A day or two after I received a long "Service" envelope addressed by name as well as my official title, which usually means something special. In this case the cover contained my appointment to have

temporary charge of the Brahmanbaria Subdivision, where my friend Peart was already in charge of the Police. These orders were not quite unexpected, and did not involve removal from the Tippera District, which I should have been sorry to leave. Smith was already under orders for the Subdivision of Madaripore, in the Dacca Commissionership, so that our house was breaking up anyhow. Subdivisional work, sometimes called solitary confinement with hard labour, is a kind of step up the ladder, and comes to most men once in their career; and the sooner it is got over, the speedier the prospect of promotion to higher appointments at the Sudder (headquarter) Station. So I acquiesced in the inevitable, and the Collector was good enough to allow me to postpone my departure till after the half-yearly examination, now close at hand.

On the 16th October Smith left for Madaripore, among the swamps and rice-fields of Backergunge and Furreedpore,—a destination I did not envy him, little thinking how soon I should follow in his track. On the 29th Peart came in from Brahmanbaria to attend the examination, and about 4 A.M. on the 31st rode over to my house. I had had enough of a solitary night journey on my last visit to Chittagong, and preferred a ride by day in company. It was getting light as we cleared the bazaar and emerged on the open road. Being fairly horsed, we got along well, and halted for breakfast at the Boidya Bazaar inspection bungalow, whither my *masálchi* (prize-winner at the Beauty Show) had gone to prepare the banquet. These bungalows are bamboo huts put up at intervals along the road mainly for the convenience of Engineers and Subordinates of the Public Works Department, but available also for other officers when travelling on duty. They contain the most necessary articles of furniture, as tables, chairs, &c., but travellers must bring their own bedding, food and table equipage. The only regular dak bungalow with a khansama in charge between Comilla and Chittagong is (or was then) at Zorawulgunge, south of the Fenny.

Peart had borrowed a Police Inspector's pony for one stage, a ragged Bengali beast, with all the inherent "cussedness" of the race. Like an Irish pig, the little brute would go any way but the right one; and when at length Peart used the spur, the effect was a sudden spin round and bolt down the side of the embanked road, which sent him sprawling. One spur must have caught, for the heel was nearly wrenched off his

boot. I was riding "Xit," and magnanimously offered to change ponies ; which being done, for a time we got on all right, till Peart mischievously suggested that I should try the spur ; I gave what was meant for a *very* gentle touch, when in a moment the manœuvre was repeated, and I found myself on my back, contemplating the sky. It was too absurd to be thus floored by a wretched tattoo, but neither having the advantage we could both see the joke ; so the pony was caught, and we proceeded : I need hardly add that his ribs and our spurs made no further acquaintance.

Peart being short of horses on the Chittagong side of the Fenny, I took "Dick" across for him to ride a stage. The ferry-boat was a simple contrivance,—two dug-out canoes fastened together, and a platform of bamboos covered with straw laid across. This is much used in Assam and Eastern Bengal, and the double-hull arrangement makes it steady and safe. With side-rails, and a timber platform instead of bamboos, a substantial vessel may be made, fit to carry cattle, carts, &c. It is punted with long bamboos or propelled by oars, according to the depth of water. "Dick" was rather nervous at first, and I was afraid he might try to jump overboard as the boat had no railings ; but being soothed and encouraged the sensible little horse quieted down, and we crossed all right. We halted for the night at Zorawulgunge dak bungalow, which had been lately refitted with new crockery and table cutlery, mosquito curtains to the beds, and other luxuries, making it much more comfortable. Next day we rode on to Seetakoond, where two tonjons awaited us with a note from Wilkinson, the Assistant at Chittagong, who, being unable to get horses for the whole distance, had sent these conveyances to bring us in. After a seventy-mile ride from Comilla we did not object to this arrangement, and the men trotted in the twenty-three miles, with one halt for food, in very good style. Arriving at about 11 P.M., Peart and I parted company, he to put up with the Adjutant of the regiment, and I with Wilkinson, who was still in the house he occupied with M'Gilpin when I left Chittagong, but now had another chum, Keller, the acting Joint. M'Gilpin had left, unable to stand the climate of the Hill Tracts, and there had been two changes in the office of Joint Magistrate since February ; thus people come and go, and a few months may quite transform the official community in any station.

There was no hitch about the papers this time ; and the examination took place in the Commissioner's office as before. I spent a pleasant week at Chittagong, and on the 8th November Peart and I once more left for Comilla, where we arrived the following evening. The next few days were spent in final preparations, and having got my things put on board Peart's boat, which he kindly shared with me, we started Sunday evening, the 13th November. for my first separate charge, the Subdivision of Brahmanbaria.

CHAPTER VI

BRAHMANBARIA SUBDIVISION.—A TRIP UP THE GOOMTEE.—1864

It was a lovely moonlight night, and the air deliciously cool; the Indian winter having fairly set in, when the weather is perfect. Just before starting, my khitmutgar was discovered hidden under my bed in the cabin, in terror of his creditors, some of whom had pursued him to the waterside and were then on the bank. He looked rather foolish when lugged out from his place of concealment, but probably found means to pacify the claimants, for I was not deprived of his services by arrest. Peart's boat was comfortable, though rather small for two; but we managed very well, and the trip was pleasanter for being made in company. When the current was favourable, the boatmen used the oars; when it was adverse, or when some of the crew were cooking or eating, three or four men were told off to the *goon* or tow-rope which passes through a pulley at the mast-head. Each man has a short line attached to the *goon* with a piece of bamboo at the other end which he claps over his shoulder, and so hauls at the rope: any number can thus be made to tow, according to the size and weight of the vessel. Our progress was slow but steady: dinner was generally served under a tree on the bank, pleasanter than the confined cabin; and for cooking purposes there was a separate boat, which also carried the servants and dogs. We arrived early on the 17th November, landing at a place called Gokun, whence we walked to Brahmanbaria, some two miles: it was much more by water, as the river makes a long circuit. "Dick" and "Xit" had marched overland from Comilla in charge of the syces, as also a horse belonging to Peart, lately purchased in Calcutta. Next day I took charge from my predecessor, Moulvie

Tujummul Ali, a Mahomedan Deputy Magistrate and Collector, and was thus duly installed as Subdivisional Officer.

In appearance, the station of Brahmanbaria was not very imposing. The office buildings which also contained quarters for the Magistrate, Peart's residence, and that of the Moonsiff or Subordinate Civil Judge, were all bamboo structures with thatched roofs: at a distance was the Lock-up or Subdivisional Jail, built of masonry. There was a Police Station, a bit of road leading to the Lock-up, and another to the bazaar. The surrounding country was much like that about Comilla,—villages and rice-fields,—but no hills were visible.

We two being the only Europeans in the place naturally fraternised: my bed-room was in the Cutcherry building, but we messed together in Peart's house, which in all other respects was our chummery. There was not much variety in our daily routine: when Peart returned from early parade¹ we generally got into long boots, mounted our steeds and cantered through the bazaar; inspected my gang of coolies at work on the road, and had a breezy gallop with the dogs over the now dry paddy-fields. Then home to bath and breakfast, after which Peart heard Police reports in a tent pitched in the compound, while I went off to Cutcherry, where a crowd of natives awaited the *Hákim*.² Cutcherry was no longer so dark a mystery as it first appeared at Chittagong; but there is more to do at a subdivision than at headquarters where the work is divided among many; and I was generally kept rather late in office.

Peart started a garden with seeds given him by the Collector and District Superintendent of Police, brought in boxes of earth from Comilla. Presently these began to sprout, and great was the speculation as to when they would produce anything for the table, from which point of view the experiment chiefly interested me. Fired with emulation at my example, Peart also commenced a Diary; and being a dab at water colours, soon had a journal full of pictures which in brilliancy of tints quite threw my sober pen-and-ink designs into the shade. We used to compare notes, admiring each other's work and depreciating our own, after the manner of modest authors.

¹ The Bengal Police are a semi-military force, and drilled like sepoys.

² Judge or Magistrate. The presiding officer of any Court.

The life was pleasant, but not fated to last. On the 28th November I received orders from the Collector to return to Comilla on being relieved by a native officer, to whom I resigned the reins of government on the 1st December, having been barely a fortnight in charge of my first Subdivision. Poor Peart was disgusted at this sudden change, for we had been very jolly together, and my successor was a Baboo, with whom of course there could be nothing like social intimacy. On the 2nd December we had a last gallop over the paddy-fields, and that evening rode to Gokun, where I once more embarked for Comilla. Reaching the station early on the 6th, I found orders awaiting me to take temporary charge of the Madaripore Subdivision (see page 84), not much to my delight, but the needs of the public service do not always jump with private inclinations. Walking up to the Circuit-house, that convenient refuge for houseless officials, I found the new Assistant Patrick Harley, an Irish civilian of the year below me, who it appeared knew two of the old Barraekpore chummery, and gave a graphic account of the great cyclone which in October had passed over Calcutta, doing immense damage, especially to the shipping in port. After breakfast we parted company, Harley going to Cutcherry for the first time, as I had done a year ago at Chittagong, while I went to pay some calls.

Being now under orders for another Subdivision, and no longer on the staff of the Tippera District, I resolved to spend part of my joining time in a long-projected expedition up the Goomtee into Hill Tippera. On the 10th December I made a preliminary excursion, returning on the 13th, but need not dwell on this, as I went over the same ground a few days later. A second start was made on Sunday evening, the 18th, from Bibi Hát on the border of the hills, in two small *dinghies*, each with two men,—one for myself, the other for the kitchen and servants. These were, the “mate” or under-bearer, a fat youth named Gopi; khitmutgar; and cook. Our guide in the wilderness was old Ratan Gazi, who had been recommended by Mangles, and had accompanied me on the previous excursion,—a well-known Comilla shikari reputed to have shot more than one tiger on foot,—an elderly man with white moustache, faded blue-green turban (the colour of the Prophet), short loose drawers of the same tint, and an old drab cloth shooting jacket, a present probably from some former employer. The old fellow was quite a

character, capital company by the camp-fire, being full of *shikar* stories. with quiet and dignified manners. My jemadar completed the list, a sort of private chuprassie or orderly, who looked after the guns and ammunition; and "Bosh," a little smooth black-terrier given me by Monsieur Joseph Delaval, was also of the party.

The current of the Goomtee is tolerably rapid at Comilla, and swifter up in the hills: the only way to get along is by punting, for rowing would be no good, and the steep jungly banks prevent the use of the *goon-rope*. Small boats of light draught were thus indispensable. Each was roofed in astern with bamboo matting, beneath which in my boat there was just room for the bedding on one side, guns and other belongings on the other. The quarters were close, but snug; everything was in its place, and handy to get at. Our furniture comprised a cane *morah* or stool, an armchair of wood and cane made in the Comilla Jail, and a wooden "teapoy"¹ or three-legged table for meals. Casting off from the bank we were soon in the woods, leaving civilisation behind us.

Next morning (December 19th) we landed on a sandy spit, where I shot a young jungle-cock sitting. I should probably have missed him flying, and considerations for the pot were allowed to override the instincts of fair play. Meantime the jemadar crossed the river and contributed a *dumquail*, or imperial pigeon. These birds go about one or two together—not in flocks like the green pigeon—and can generally be bagged if carefully approached as they sit on a high bare tree. Their note is a curious gruff sound, not much like cooing. They are larger and heavier than the common pigeon, and very good eating; in colour a kind of slaty blue. Having thus replenished the larder we resumed our course. the man in the bows dexterously punting the boat along with his bamboo *luggee* (pole), while the helmsman steered with his paddle. Early in the day, while there was a chance of seeing jungle-fowl or other game on the bank, I sat on the *morah* in front with my gun. "Bosh" lying at my feet. Astern by the steersman stood Ratan, keeping a look-out, for natives can often see objects in the jungle invisible to Europeans. As the sun rose higher I retired to the cabin and lay on my mattress reading. Meals were served in some shady

¹ Hindustani *tipai*, (that which has) three feet.

place on the bank, fresh and hot from the handy cook-boat. Picnicking is pleasant in December; but shade is always desirable: even in the cold season the Indian sun is powerful.

My success with the jungle-fowl was not great. These birds are tough, and unless killed or very hard hit generally get away. In several places there were tracks of elephants on the bank, the mud ploughed up by their great feet where they had come down to the water. Ratan also pointed out the footprints of a *goba* (*gayál*), a wild ox or bison found in these jungles. Troops of monkeys gravely regarded us from bushes by the water, and promenaded with tails erect along the bank. Accustomed to see boats with natives passing on the river they were not alarmed, and we had no wish to molest them. But "Bosh" did not quite understand the situation, and was greatly scandalised by their impudence, though my poor "Jacko" at Comilla had been one of his earliest playmates.

The country traversed to-day was not very hilly, the banks being high but not rocky, covered with jungle, and grass tall enough to hide an elephant. In the evening we landed and scrambled up the bank, following a wood-cutter's path. We found tracks of about ten elephants, but saw nothing. My jemadar shinned up a tree to reconnoitre, and reported "*Burra bhári jangal!*" (very thick jungle), which was no news, as we were in the middle of it. Natives are good climbers. If the tree is not too thick, they embrace the trunk and stick their feet against it. Having thus got a purchase up they go, alternately shifting the grasp of the arms and pressure of the feet, which possess a prehensile power unknown to wearers of boots. A native in a boat will sometimes work the paddle with one of his feet; and on land if a man with a load on his head drops his stick, rather than stoop he will pick it up with his toes. Returning to the river side we met "Bosh" coming to look for his master, and thought at first it was a young bear.

After dinner we sat round a roaring fire on the bank, while Ratan told stories, among others how two wild elephants came down from the hills into the plains of Tippera, one of which was made to eat many bullets by the narrator, but finally escaped to the woods, disgusted no doubt at his inhospitable reception. Glorious bonfires these by the Goomtee, and no need to spare the fuel. It was pleasant to sit by the blazing logs and watch

the blue smoke curling up into the starry sky, enjoying the genial warmth, doubly grateful in the keen night air, and the novelty of the situation. Around, the silent forest;—below, the swiftly gliding river; no sound to break the stillness but the swirl of the stream round a snag, or its ripple against the boats swinging at their moorings;—now and then the bark of a deer in the distance or the cry of some wandering night-bird;—ourselves the only human beings in this woodland solitude. This was life in the wilderness at last!

December 20th, forenoon, we reached Oodeypore, where the Tippera Raja keeps a few Sepoys: his palace is at Agartolla, in the hills to the north of the river. Oodeypore was not much of a place,—a small bazaar and a few villages with a stretch of land cleared and partly cultivated. The Bengali inhabitants trade with the hill-men, exchanging imported commodities (tobacco, salt, &c.) for cotton and other hill-produce. The settlement is surrounded by hills and jungle, and only approachable by water. Here I had to show a pass which I had obtained from one of the Raja's agents at Comilla, authorising me to shoot in his territory.

Beyond Oodeypore the banks grew loftier, forming a succession of deep gorges, through which the river turned and twisted. The sides rose precipitously, bare for some distance from the water's edge, then covered with luxuriant vegetation and trees rising tier on tier to the summit of cliffs far overhead, where the topmost branches glistened in the sunlight. That giant vegetable the banana or wild plantain tossed abroad its banner-like leaves, their glossy yellow green contrasting vividly with the dark wall of forest behind. The creepers were wonderful; some dropping straight down like bell-ropes from the tops of tall trees; others hanging in festoons from branch to branch, the lower stems of these parasites winding like twisted cables round the tree trunks. Among these, most elegant in appearance was the rattan cane, with its pretty fern-like fronds;—an innocent-looking plant, but armed at all points with formidable spines, which cover not only the main stems but also the backs of the leaves, making the most impervious thicket. It also throws out delicate whip-like streamers, closely covered with tiny thorns set backwards like hooks, so minute and so exactly the colour of the spray on which they grow that they are scarcely to be seen,



though very unpleasantly *felt* when coming in contact with the skin.

The river was full of snags, some projecting above the water, which were easily avoided; others more dangerous, near the surface but covered; and now and then the boat went over one of these, the flat-bottomed hull rasping over the obstacle from stem to stern. At the mouth of a little streamlet we landed to explore, but the dense cover prevented our going far. Here were several trees bearing a fruit something like a large green apple called *cholta*, of which deer are very fond, and some lying about bore marks of munching. Tracks of deer were numerous, and there must have been one close by, for suddenly we heard a heavy animal start up and gallop off, though the jungle was too thick to see anything. Further up the river we came upon a party of Ryangs, apparently from the eastward in search of new land, bringing their families, goods and chattels on rafts. Ratan thought they had left their homes through fear of the *kutchas*¹ Kookies. The hill-tribes are many and various. On the Tippera border the best known are the Ryangs, a quiet, inoffensive race who trade with the Bengalis, and can speak their language. The wild Kookies on the other hand are regular savages, not only attacking the Ryangs, but making raids into British territory, harrying Bengali villages and taking to the hills with plunder and captives. These are probably first cousins to the Lushais. Our boats attracted attention from the party on shore, one of whom, more civilised than the rest, and carrying a gun of Monghyr manufacture, came on board. He said he had been a sepoy, adding that on ahead the jungle was very thick, and not at all a place for "Baboo-lóg" (gentlemen) to go to. He talked Hindustani and mouthed his words grandly, though judging by his looks he was no distant relation to the folks on the bank. Finally, he begged some powder and shot, of which I gave him a little, and a few caps. We halted for the evening at a bit of sandy beach under a sheer face of rock like the wall of an old fort, covered with jungle, where a little rivulet joined the main stream, made a good fire and rested till the moon rose at about one o'clock, when we punted on again.

Next morning (December 21st) we landed at another sandy spit, where the water shelved off invitingly, running slow and deep with a

¹ Raw. In this sense, wild and uncivilised.

little backwater under a perpendicular rock on the opposite side. Cold as it was, the spot seemed so perfectly designed for a bath that I set my teeth and plunged in. Whew! such a stinger—like the river at Cambridge on a cold September morning. “Bosh,” seeing me in the water, flopped in too, and tried to get on my back. The most enjoyable part of the performance was, I must confess, getting out, with the consciousness of having braved the cold. The faithful Gopi rubbed me down by a splendid fire, and a cup of hot coffee soon restored the circulation. The Ryangs were in considerable numbers about here, and we passed several apparently new settlements, the rafts with their belongings being still moored under the bank. At one of these some women were husking paddy in a hollow log stuck on end, round which they stood, each wielding a club or elongated pestle, with which they pounded the grain till it was fit to be winnowed. Ratan tried to get information from these people about game higher up the river, but the answers were vague, and did not help us much. They warned us not to go up the Chángáng (a smaller river running into the Goomtee from the north), as the *kutchá* Kookies, great *budzúts* (ruffians), were in those parts. One of the Ryangs sold me a spear for Rs.2. The blade was broad, thin, and sharp; the handle of some dark red wood; length about four feet; with an iron point at the butt-end for sticking in the ground. It seemed a formidable weapon, and could be used either as a javelin or for thrusting.

At another place we landed, and saw *pooja* (worship) performed by one who appeared to be a priest or medicine man of the Ryangs. A rude bamboo erection was covered with bunches of cotton, offerings of crayfish, gourds and other fruits, the ground strewn with rice arranged in a pattern. The priest stood in front of this sylvan altar, striking two pieces of iron together, and rehearsing a monotonous chant, the burden of which was a repetition of words or short sentences ending in a nasal sound like *ung*—“Ryung-ng-ng!! Ryung-ng-ng!! Kála rung-ng-ng!! Kála rung-ng-ng!!” At intervals he raised his voice and vociferated! “AY-AY-AY-AY-O-O-O-O!!!!” then in a lower key, “Ay-ay-ay-ay-o-o-o-o!!!!” and again reverted to his dreary dirge in “ung-ng-ng.” After a while he put down his bits of iron and got hold of a fine cock, a victim destined for sacrifice. He proceeded with his recitative, and

whenever he came to a point on which he wished to lay particular stress, he emphasised it by a thump with his fist on the cock's back, to which the unlucky bird responded with a grunt. We did not wait to see the sacrifice completed. The ceremony was probably one of mere routine, performed regularly to propitiate the Deity: the audience was neither large nor attentive. Ratan said that when the padre yelled out his "Ay-ay-ay-ay-o-o-o-o!!!" he was calling on the Divinity in question. The altar was tastefully ornamented with branches of trees, on which were hung little baskets with offerings, like presents on a Christmas-tree.

The scenery was now magnificent; the river running between walls of rock, clothed with vegetation, and topped with fine trees. From the water's edge the cliffs rose almost perpendicular, in places even overhanging, where water oozing from fissures fell straight into the river below—perfect dripping wells. Now and then we passed the mouth of a little stream that came struggling out from the depths of a dark glen where no sunbeam ever found its way, and from which a draught of cold, damp air blew down upon us. Moss and ferns flourished in this moist atmosphere, kept fresh and green by the constant drip and percolation. In these deep clefts the sun was so completely shut out that it was almost cold. The surroundings were grand, but there was an almost total absence of animal life, and everything was just a little too lonely and quiet. There were birds certainly, and I especially noticed some lovely little scarlet fellows about the size of sparrows, but have no idea what they were. Perched on a tree far overhead were also four monkeys, different from those met with lower down the river. Ratan said they were black, with white eyebrows and no tails, doubtless the Gibbon ape or *Hooluk* (p. 79).

A little further on we came upon a gigantic figure cut in the face of the rock, half concealed by jungle; and still higher up was a cliff covered with carved niches, each containing a figure or group. This specimen of rock carving, called *Debta Mura* (Idol rock) by the natives who ply on the river, is a curious relic, and at that time at least had been seen by few if any Europeans. Natives, when questioned on the subject, say that these remains date from the time of the old *Rája-log*; but who these Rájas were and when they flourished is a mystery. The carvings were certainly not done by the hill-men, and their existence seems to show

that these regions were once peopled by a more civilised race¹. Part of the sculptured face of the *Debta Mura* had fallen away, but enough remained to indicate the general design—rows of niches, one above the other, each containing the representation of some Hindoo (or Buddhist) divinity.

Soon after passing the Picture-rock, we emerged from the deep gorges into a less hilly tract, through which the river ran between high banks, covered with tall grass jungle. The stream had narrowed, and ran almost like a torrent. Numerous snags made navigation difficult even for small boats like ours, and in one or two places the passage was almost barred by fallen trees. In the evening we landed, and, following a Ryang path, came to some deserted clearings. From the top of one we got a fine view, and Ratan pointed out a lofty range of mountains in the distance, beyond which he said lay the *Kāla Pahār* (Black Hills), the stronghold of Ratan Puya, a Kookie chief who gave trouble a few years back. Ratan came across two barking deer, but I was not on the spot, and when I at last perceived his frantic signals they were no longer in sight. I saw two jungle-cocks; and Hanumán monkeys were frisking about in the bamboos down below, evidently displeased at our intrusion. Returning to the boats, we had dinner under a splendid tree by a roaring fire, the draught from which made the leaves overhead dance again.

Next morning (December 22nd) we again visited the *jhooms*, and started a barking deer that had come to lick the salt ashes from a smouldering log fired by the Ryangs, but did not get a shot. I saw only monkeys and jungle-fowl, but Ratan sighted a female barking deer. We did not make a long stage to-day, but halted about noon, and Ratan went scouting for deer in the *jhooms*. In the evening we went over, saw plenty of jungle-fowl, and heard deer crashing through the bamboos at foot of the clearings, but caught never a glimpse of their dun hides. On the way back we came upon a Ryang house, where Ratan interviewed one of the occupants, while another politely brought a light for my cheroot. Our new acquaintances raised our drooping spirits, and one

¹ In Ludlow's *History of India* mention is made of ancient tanks, roads, &c., found in the midst of the Cuttack jungles, and attributed by native report to the "old Rajas," contemporaries, perhaps, of those whose work adorns the gorges of the Goomtee.

offered to show us a *jhoom* in the morning where deer often came. With this welcome news we trudged back to the river, and soon had our camp-fire in full blast as usual.

Punctual to his appointment, the Ryang appeared next morning, and piloted us to the *jhooms* about sunrise. We followed the path in single file, and emerging into the open perceived a large hairy dun animal, with a smaller one alongside, going down the hill at a lob-lollop-ing canter through the cotton bushes a few yards in front. Here was a chance at last! Even a bad shot might hope to hit at such close quarters, but the suddenness of the apparition took me aback, and while I was fingering the sights of my rifle the female sambur and her fawn in a few bounds cleared the *jhoom* and vanished in the bamboo jungle at foot of the hill. Poor old Ratan must have been disgusted; he kept shouting, "*Mářiye, sahīb, mářiye!*" (Shoot, sir, shoot!), while the Ryang danced with excitement, brandishing his *dao*,¹ which, no doubt, he was longing to apply to the throat of the quarry. At this distance of time I can reflect that it would have been unsportsmanlike to fire at a doe with her fawn; but this did not then occur to me; and my only consolation was, that not to shoot was one degree better than to shoot and not hit!

It was now decided to go no further up the river: the navigation grew worse and worse; we knew nothing of the country; and my time was getting short. It seemed better to try back, and beat up some hunting ground familiar to Ratan, who had never been further east than the Picture-rock before, and to that point only once. So turning the boats westward, we pushed out into the stream, which was running like a mill-race, and bore us down nobly. We flew past the *Debta Mura*, and went gliding through the dark cool gorges, up which we had so laboriously punted a day or two before. The boatmen had now an easy time—a little gentle poling and guiding being all that was needed, the river did the rest. We made good speed, and by evening reached our

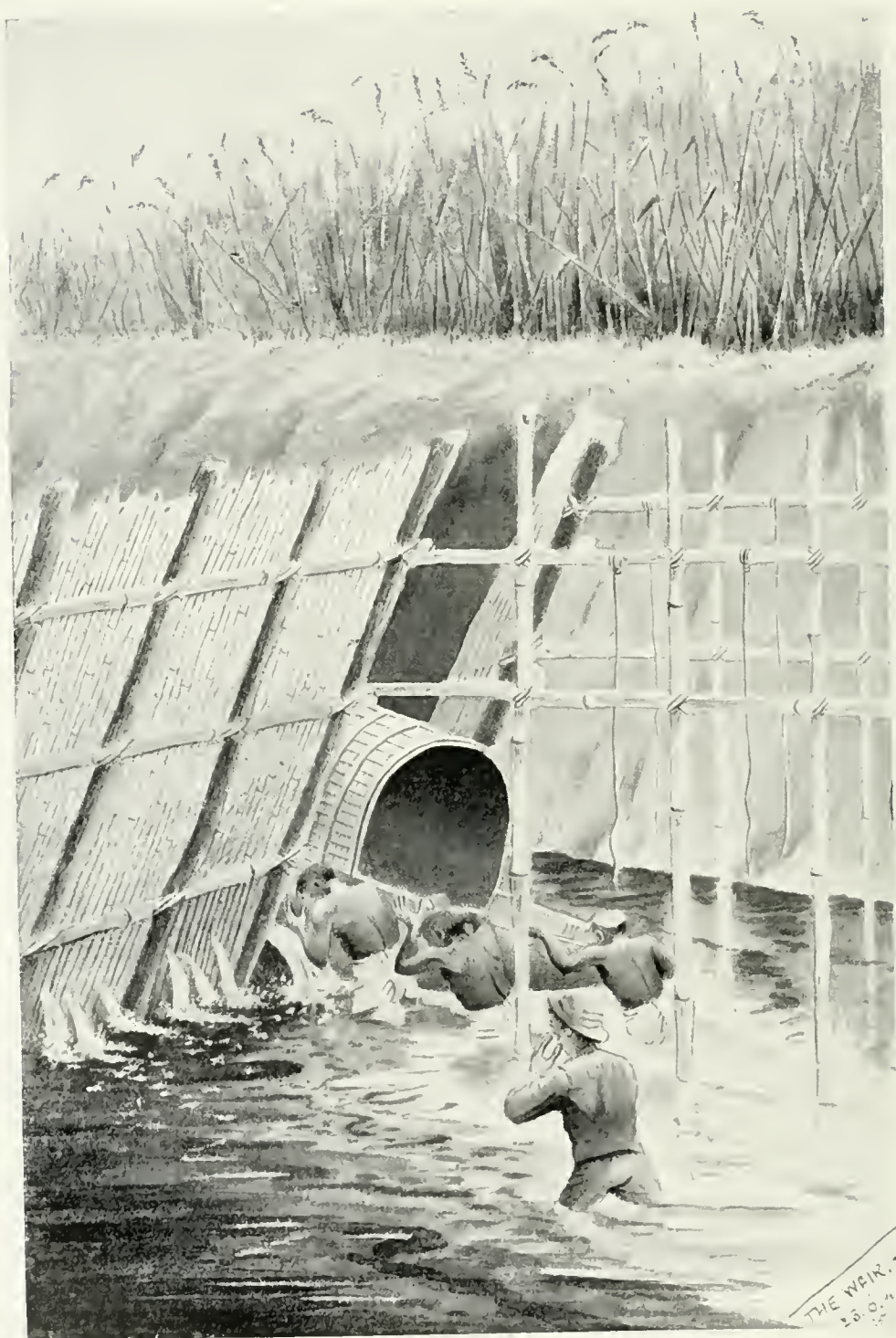
¹ The Bengali *dao* or hatchet, shaped something like a bill-hook, is a most useful tool for chopping bamboos, &c., scraping the scales off fish and cutting them up, shredding vegetables for curry, and other purposes. The hill-man's *dao* is longer and heavier, the blade straight and widening to the end, which is square. Its uses are not only domestic, but like the Goorkhas' *kookree* it is also a weapon of offence, very effective in practised hands.

halting place of Tuesday night. At a council of *shikar* by the camp-fire it was resolved to make for a *jheel* or swamp called Surijhalla, and try for sambur. The place was a noted haunt of these animals, and being a few hours' boat journey from Comilla, was visited by *shikaris* from that station, though less frequently than Ludijhalla, another *jheel* still easier of access. Ratan knew these hunting-grounds well, and could give us the benefit of his experience. We proposed to fire the jungle, though the result was doubtful, it being early in the season, and the undergrowth hardly dry enough. The jungle is fired every year by the hill-tribes and Bengalis living in the hill-region. One object is, to clear the hills for *jhoom* cultivation; another, to secure pasture for cattle, the young grass shooting up fresh and green from the ashes. From a shikari's point of view, burning the jungle clears the dense cover and facilitates the pursuit of large game: moreover, the fire leaves a layer of salt ashes of which deer are very fond, so the ground is baited as well as cleared.

On Christmas Day we passed Oodeypore, where a copy of my "permit" was taken by the authorities, and shot down the river towards Comilla, the boatmen incited to do their best by the promise of *backsheesh* if they got to Surijhalla before night.

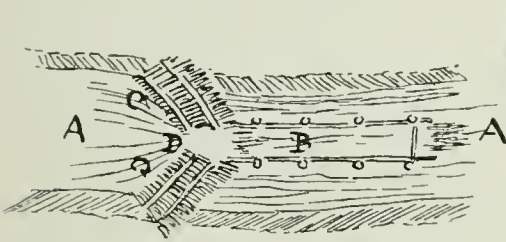
Towards evening we reached the mouth of the *Ráni Khál* (Queen's Channel), a small creek which, running into the Goomtee from the south, connects it with Surijhalla. Punting up this was slow work, the water being low, and snags numerous, in places almost blocking the way. A further obstruction was encountered in the shape of a fishing-trap or weir made by the Ryangs right across the creek. On my former trip, when Surijhalla was my furthest point, the Ryangs opened the weir and got the boats through, but now they were not to the fore.

The illustration opposite may give an idea of the structure. AA is the *khál*, B a trough or apron of cane-work and mats, hung by canes to a scaffolding of bamboos, the far end being hoisted up, so that while the water escaped the fish were left behind. CC are the stockaded wings of the weir, made of trees and bamboos, set close, so that nothing of any size could pass through. The stream thus confined poured through at D in a regular waterfall, the space between the wings being just enough to admit the dinghies. Up this cascade the boats had to be got somehow,

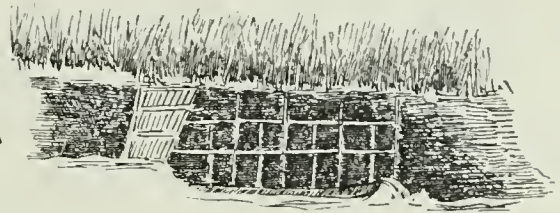


THE WEIR.
E.S.O.

and as night was coming on, there was no time to lose. It was a case of "all hands"—even the portly Gopi turned to with a will, and two Bengali boatmen, most opportunely on the spot, were also enlisted in the service. The cane suspenders being cut or loosed, to let the boats over the end, we all got on the apron, in water waist-deep, and by dint of shoving and hauling got the boats over the lasher and into smooth water. The rest was easy, and we shortly emerged from the winding *khál* into the broad expanse of a grassy lagoon. This was Suriyhalla, a wild stretch of lake and marsh shut in by low jungly hills, the water visible in patches, elsewhere covered with reeds and grass, like a Norfolk Broad in the days of the Druids. Just as we were leaving the *khál*, my men spied a female sambur¹ feeding in the *jheel*. I did not see her, but



PLAN.



SECTION.

there she was, and had to be driven out of a patch of long grass to which she had retreated. So, sending the cook-boat round to one side, Ratan and I went in my boat to the other and waited. She broke cover, but not in our direction, dashing straight across the *jheel* towards the thick hilly jungle. I sighted her head and ears, rising and falling as she went splashing through the water, and fired. Ratan vowed that the bullet went straight between her ears, just a little too high! Anyhow, the miss was excusable, for it would take a very good shot to stop a flying deer with nothing to aim at but the head and ears bobbing up and down. The jemadar in the cook-boat got so excited that he let fly both barrels, loaded with *shot*!

Night was now falling, so materials for a shanty were collected and

¹ Or maybe a swamp-deer, which resembles the sambur, and natives probably would not know the difference.

the boats moored at a green shelving bit of beach, where, by the joint exertions of Ratan and the jemadar, a little bamboo hut, walled and thatched with reeds, was quickly set up. Into this we put our bedding, and soon had a roaring fire, by which after dinner I sat over my coffee and cheroot, dreaming of home and Christmases past and gone. Our hut was very comfortable—a pleasant change after being so long cooped up in a small boat. Ratan said afterwards that he heard a tiger once or twice, but I was unconscious of this or any other voices of the night, and slept soundly.

Next morning there was a dense fog, and it was so cold that I was glad to stay by the fire till the sun had dispelled the mists. After breakfast, the sun being high and a breeze having sprung up, we crossed the *jheel* and fired the jungle. In one or two places it caught well and flared up gloriously, especially when the flames came across a clump of dry bamboos, up which they darted roaring and crackling, frizzling up the leaves and twigs, and presently leaving the bare and blackened shafts, like a bundle of gas-pipes set on end. As was to be expected, the jungle was not everywhere dry enough; but when the fire did get a good hold it was a sight to watch it, now burning low in the short grass, then suddenly catching some high bush and leaping up, sputtering triumphantly as if in delight at finding something worth burning; and gradually advancing till a clear space was left, covered with smoking ashes and blackened stubble, while the line of fire went singing away over the brow of the next hillock into the distance. While the bamboos were blazing, a number of king-crows—small black birds with long forked tails—kept darting about in the smoke after insects, no doubt driven out by the fire. They did not mind the flames, being rather attracted by what gave them a good meal. We found several trees bearing a small fruit about the size of a crab-apple, of which deer are very fond, and knocked some down among the ashes with a bamboo, so as to provide additional attraction to the game. I had a few stewed for dinner, but found them rather bitter.

Our camp at Surijhalla was very snug, especially at the morning hour, when the sun was high enough to make things look cheerful without being too hot, the wild landscape at its best in the bright morning air, while the inmates of the bivouac were rousing to their several

occupations;—Ratan carefully loading his favourite old double-barrel,—the jemadar examining my rifles by a blazing fire at which the boatmen were warming themselves on one side, the stout Gopi on the other, while the khitmutgar presented a steaming cup of coffee which, with a cigar, was no bad preparation for the day's work. The hut was small but compact—just room for our beds; and the dinghies were moored close by to bamboos stuck in the ground. Thus everything was in a nut-shell,—our house on shore, our boats in the water,—and what more could any one want!

On just such a morning (December 27th) we punted across the *jheel* and went to inspect the scene of yesterday's prairie fire. We saw no deer, but found fresh tracks in the soft ashes, particularly under one of the trees from which the crab-like fruits had been knocked down. The fire was still smouldering, and a good space was burnt clear, nothing but stubble remaining. So Ratan made a screen of boughs, with holes to peep through, on a hummock commanding a good view; which done, we returned to breakfast.

A fish-eagle (*kurua*) frequented the *jheel* close to our camp, a handsome fellow, and it was pretty to see him poised in the air on the lookout; then half-closing his wings take a corkscrew header into the water, going right in, tail and all. This morning I had fired at a white paddy-bird or egret, and thought I had missed as usual. Presently, the *kurua* appeared, made a series of swoops just over the spot on the grassy *jheel* where the egret had been, and at length, after a final dive, emerged triumphantly bearing off the bird head downward in his claws. His keen sight must have told him that the egret was hit, and audacity did the rest.

The Ryangs came to camp to-day, and asked when we were going back, as the fish were meantime escaping over the weir. They helped to beat a patch of long grass in the *jheel*, but nothing was turned out. In the afternoon a tiger was heard across the water, probably on the prowl.

Towards evening, Ratan and I went to our "surround"; on the way we saw a barking deer, and heard some heavy animal bursting through the underwood. We sat quiet till about sundown, when Ratan pointed out two sambur that had just come out into the open, cooing their great ears, and sniffing about among the smoking ashes, as if not sure

that all was right. It was a female and her fawn; we waited for them to come closer, but after keeping us some time in suspense they quietly made off in another direction, and soon vanished in the gathering shades of evening. Thus, for the second time, a doe with her fawn got off unseathed. It is noteworthy that during the whole trip we never viewed a stag. While sitting we heard a shrill cry like that of a bird, which Ratan said was a tiger. I should never have thought a tiger capable of making such a sound. Returning to camp, we started a barking deer: he bounded along, his white stern glancing in the twilight, till at a safe distance he gave vent to a series of hoarse barks, growing fainter and fainter as he receded into the jungle.

The larder now contained but one duck and one fowl, so it was decided that next day we must bid adieu to the woods and return to Comilla; and on Wednesday, 28th December, with a pang of regret at leaving our cosy little camp, we embarked our traps, cast off from our moorings, and went smoothly gliding down the *khāl*. The Ryangs were at the weir, which they opened, and the boats shot the fall in grand style, a very different process from getting up it. Comilla was reached about sundown, and, going to the Circuit-house, I found Harley the Assistant all alone, the rest of the station having migrated to Mynamuttee, where a sort of prolonged picnic was in progress.

Next day I saw Mangles in Cutcherry, who was amused at my want of success, and good-humouredly bantered me with being a "good shooter, but a bad hitter." All too true; but I had nevertheless enjoyed the trip. Moreover, there was consolation in a budget of home-letters, and the Gazette was out, with my name in the list of those who had passed by the Higher Standard. This was glorious news indeed, and it was a relief to feel that now there were *no* more examinations to look forward to.

I had fixed on New Year's Day to start for my new Subdivision, and on the night of the 31st December Harley and I saw the Old Year out and the New Year in, feeling very cold and sleepy. Thus ended my sojourn at Comilla, a place I left with regret, and tried to get back to more than once; but the fates were against it, and I never rejoined the Tippera District, which has always had a fond corner in my memory.

CHAPTER VII

SUBDIVISIONAL EXPERIENCES : MADARIPORE AND MOONSHEEGUNGE.—
1865-6

MADARIPORE being in the region of big rivers, the route from Comilla was by water. A halt was made at Daoodkandi, where there is a Police Station and dak bungalow. At this point the Goomtee flows into the Megna, and the high road to Dacca stops short, being continued at Naraingunge on the other side. The Megna is fed by streams from the Soorma Valley (Sylhet and Cachar) and the eastern part of Mymensingh. It divides the Dacca and Chittagong Divisions, and after receiving through the Pudda¹ the combined waters of the Ganges and Brahmaputra, enters the Bay of Bengal through several broad channels or estuaries formed by islands near its mouth. To get to my new Subdivision, therefore, the Megna had to be crossed ; and after enquiring at the Daoodkandi Police Station as to the direction, we launched out upon the mighty river. Water birds were numerous, and ammunition was expended, without much result. Out of an immense flock of black and white birds however one was brought down, and proved to be rather a curious specimen, a “ scissor-bill gull,”² with orange-coloured beak, lightening to yellow at the tip, not pointed as in the common gull, but flattened vertically towards the end, like a pair of blunt scissors, the upper mandible being shorter than the lower. These birds skim over the surface of the water, and the peculiar shape of the beak no doubt facilitates the capture of insects, small fry swimming near the surface, or whatever they feed on.



¹ Padma (pronounced Pudda)—the Lotus flower.

² Or Indian Skimmer (*Rhynchops albicollis*).

On the 5th January we reached Madaripore, a bare and dreary-looking place, especially after the picturesque scenery of Hill Tippera. The house was a decent masonry building by the river, but there was scarcely a tree in the compound, and the garden had been woefully neglected. For stabling and outhouses there were one or two ruinous bamboo huts; the Cutcherry was little better than a cowshed; and a collection of mat hovels within a rickety fence was dignified with the name of a Lock-up. The bazaar consisted of two straggling lanes bordered by shabby little shops—scarcely a brick wall amongst the lot—in a disgraceful state of rubbish and dirt. Behind the Magistrate's house was a stretch of paddy cultivation, stubble fields at this season, hard, lumpy, and full of cracks from the hot sun, and no road leading anywhere beyond the bazaar. There was no European Police Officer, but a smart havildar or head constable, who had seen service in the Tippera and Chittagong Hills against the Kookies, showed me all about.

My predecessor, Smith, doubtless glad to get away, had made over charge some time since, and clerks with books and papers had all gone in to district headquarters at Burrisaul, whither I had to follow them, and receive the keys and other appendages of office from the Collector. So next morning I again embarked, and early on Saturday (7th January) sighted Burrisaul Church tower, a conspicuous landmark in these flat regions. The Collector's house was near the landing-place, and I was soon introduced to my new chief. Nevile had served in the Punjab, and seen stirring times in the Mutiny, having been present at the Siege of Delhi. Transferred to the Lower Provinces, he was now in charge of the swampy district of Backergunge, which must have been rather a change from his former surroundings. A lively not to say wild fellow was Nevile; wiry and active, good rider and gymnast, of whom some astonishing acrobatic feats were told—fond of sports and racing, an energetic promoter of gaiety, and needless to add a general favourite. Kind-hearted and hospitable to a fault, and easy-tempered, a newly-joined Assistant might have been tempted to look upon him as a pleasant chum rather than a strict superior. But having got over my griffinage, and being now in a semi-independent position away from the Sudder Station, I could admire the Collector's social qualities without detriment to our official relations. His house was quite a

centre of attraction, and while staying there I soon made acquaintance with other residents.

Returning to Madaripore, I spent a few days in gathering up the threads of administration and making plans for the future, and then started on tour in the interior. In this part of Bengal travelling is necessarily by water, so three boats were taken—one for myself, one for servants and kitchen, and the third for a tent to hold Cutcherry in when necessary. It was a short stage to our first halting-place, Gaurnadi Thanah, a Police Station prettily situated by the river. Burrisaul came in the way to our next camping ground, and after spending a day or two there very pleasantly, I headed for the Thanah of Kotwalipara, through a country full of watercourses infested by alligators. These creatures lie and look like logs on the sloping mud banks at ebb-tide (in Backergunge all the rivers are tidal), and appear to have about as much life in them; but in fact, unless asleep, they are wonderfully alert. Just as the sportsman thinks he is getting near enough to make sure, the huge saurian begins to slide slowly over the oozy surface, and glides into the water, where he floats with the top of his head, his wicked-looking eyes, and spiky back just above the surface, ready to dive at the first appearance of further aggression. If fired at or otherwise disturbed, the process of removal is much more rapid: a sudden twist, and the reptile slips like an eel into the water, which closes over him at once. I potted a little one, about the size of a big lizard, with my revolver from the top of a steep bank, which concealed me till just over him. The head, cut off and cleaned, made rather a pretty specimen.

Kotwalipara was a desolate-looking place, the Police Thanah and wretched bazaar standing on an oasis of high land, surrounded on all sides by low flats, which in the rains are flooded. It was said to be good snipe ground, and looked like it, but did not commend itself as a residence for human beings. There was little inducement to stay here, and I soon found my way back to Burrisaul, and thence to Madaripore.

The month of February passed in the daily routine which at a solitary Subdivision is not generally interesting; and the 1st March brought a kind though facetiously-worded invite from Nevile, summoning me at once to Burrisaul, on pain of being badly reported of at the first opportunity. Glad to get a change, I sent off "Dick" and "Xit"

overland, and followed by boat. After two days at the Sudder I revisited Kotwalipara, and held Cutcherry for a day or two. On the 14th March I was back at Burrisaul, where an accident befell my horse. Riding paria dogs with the spear was a favourite amusement, and one morning three of us were out when we came to a ditch, which my horse and another failed to clear, and the bottom being soft they floundered in the mud. I scrambled out still holding my spear with the point reversed, when "Dick" in his struggles threw up his head and got a nasty dig in the face, just under the eye. We tied it up as well as we could, and after getting home Westcott, the Assistant Collector, who was of the party, stopped the bleeding with powdered alum. He afterwards cast the horse and sewed up the wound, which then healed beautifully.

Continuing my tour, on the 22nd March I reached the Thanah of Buririhát. The country hereabouts looked more promising than at Kotwalipara, and the Police Inspector in charge, a half-caste gentleman named Benbow, gave great accounts of *shikár* in the neighbourhood, saying that buffalo, pig, leopards, tigers and monkeys (!) were all to be had within easy reach of the station. He and I made sundry excursions and saw pigs more than once, but failed to bag any. Our proceedings would have scandalized an orthodox sportsman, for the weapons carried were guns, not spears. One day I shot a hornbill, a black and white bird with a great beak, surmounted by a sort of casque, which gives it a topheavy appearance, though really the appendage is very light. There are several kinds of hornbill, with casques or excrescences varying in size from something hardly distinguishable from the beak, to the huge superstructure carried by the rhinoceros hornbill. Other birds were plentiful; and one day the bag included two pelicans. One fell to my jemadar; the other was shot as it sat on a tree, when it fell back with wings outspread and there remained till a man went up and fetched it down. Two *mánikjors* or "beefsteak birds," a black and white crane, were also killed. The natives eat these birds, so they were not wasted: they are said to be good for the table.

In the beginning of April it began to get hot, and the best of the touring season was over. Having no one to ride with of a morning I took to hunting parias, to keep myself and horse in exercise;—not very high-class sport perhaps, but there is this to be said, that a lean, wiry

paria has a very fair chance against a single horseman with a spear, and, as a preparation for pig sticking, the dog-hunt has its uses. To ride a jiuking paria across a big *maidán* is hard work; and more than once the chase had the best of it, and got safely away. I made a bad beginning however;—a dog I was after took to the water, and my own three were all swimming close by when I rode in to spear him. A thrust aimed at the paria unluckily took effect on “Bosh,” my companion up the Goomtee, and the sharp spear made a deep wound. The poor little beast was taken home in a basket, and we did what we could for him, but on the third day, going home from Cutcherry, I found him lying dead on the doorstep. He was buried under a plantain tree in the compound. The companionship even of dumb animals is valuable in the absence of human associates, and poor “Bosh’s” death was to me a real loss.

The daily monotony was broken on Easter Monday (17th April) by news of pig; so I started on “Dick,” my servants following with bamboo *lattis* (poles) for beating, and spare spears. The animals had been marked down by men of the *Mochi* (currier and cobbler) caste, also known as *Rishis* and *Boonwas*,¹ who are fond of pork, and not troubled with caste prejudices or religious prohibitions to its consumption. Aided by dogs, more powerful and courageous than the common village paria, but of similar breed, they hunt the pigs on foot, surrounding an animal and attacking it on all sides with heavy iron-bound *lattis*, so that it has but a poor chance. Pursued in this way by men who can depend on each other, there is not much risk; but it would be foolhardy indeed to tackle a boar, or even a vicious sow, single-handed.

On this occasion two sows were killed and three “squeakers” captured, one of which was taken home alive. Though not much bigger than a puppy, the little beast made impotent efforts to charge, and showed great spirit; so I cut his string and he cantered off, destined perhaps one day to grow into a gallant boar.

After a thunderstorm this morning news came that some men in a village close by had been struck by lightning. I rode off on “Xit,” with the native doctor and a policeman, whose duty it is to hold inquests in cases of unnatural or sudden death in presence of some of the neigh-

¹ More correctly perhaps *Bunwas* or *Bunwallas* (jungle-men), from the Sanskrit *ban* (forest).

bours, and report to the authorities whether or not there are grounds of suspicion as to the cause of death. In this instance three men had been struck down while cutting bamboos: one was stark dead, and had fallen headlong in the clump in which he was at work, the bamboos being apparently uninjured. The only mark noticeable on the body was a patch on one side like the "bloom" on a dark grape. The other two men were senseless, but some water revived them. The doctor gave directions for their treatment, and I heard afterwards that they were doing well.

There was not much doing in public works at Madaripore, but materials were collected for a new (bamboo) Cutcherry, to replace the old cow-shed hitherto in use; and money was sent for repairing the bazaar road, which was in bad condition. The Police havildar proved a most efficient foreman, looking after the coolies in my absence,—supervision being very necessary for these idle gentry. The favourite digging tool of the native navy is a *kodāli* or hoe. Wheelbarrows being unknown,¹ the earth is thrown into baskets, which are carried away on the heads of other coolies, and the contents placed where wanted. This is a slow process; but labour is cheap in Bengal, and time not valued at a high figure, so the work gets on somehow. It now became part of my daily routine to inspect the road works of a morning, and exhort the shopkeepers in the bazaar, who had been repeatedly enjoined to clean the road in front of their houses, and thus help to improve the thoroughfares. Orientals are apathetic, and it was difficult to get anything done: funds too were limited, and time was short, the rains being close at hand. Still, something was effected, and the place began to look less disreputable.

European visitors were few and far between. On the 9th April Westcott the Assistant looked in on his way back to Burrisaul from the half-yearly examination at Dacca, and from that time I saw never a white face till the 20th May, when the Executive Engineer of the Dacca Division appeared in a little steam cockboat called the *Fantail*, built by himself, which greatly astonished the natives. I took him

¹ An energetic engineer once thought to teach his coolies a new thing, and gave them wheelbarrows, carefully explaining their use. When his back was turned, they took off the wheels, filled the barrows with earth, clapped them on their heads and walked away, contented to do as their fathers had done before them.

round the bazaar, but fear that as a professional man he did not think much of my local works. He was on his way to inspect an old indigo factory some nineteen miles off, which Government proposed to buy as a new site for subdivisional headquarters. Having laid in a supply of wood fuel for his tiny craft, he went puffing away, leaving Madaripore to its accustomed loneliness.

On the 22nd May came a long envelope "On H.M. Service," which I hoped meant promotion, but only contained orders of transfer to another Subdivision, Moonsheegunge, in the Dacca District. Shortly after I was summoned to the Sudder Station, to be sworn Justice of the Peace before Nevile left for Dacca, to which district he had been transferred as Collector-Magistrate, so at my new Subdivision he would still be my chief. Commissions are issued periodically, and civilians usually become J.P. after serving a year or so. No European can be tried for an offence by any officer who is not a Justice, so it is necessary for some members of every district staff to be vested with such powers. Having taken the oath, I stayed at Burrisaul with Westcott and Pelham, a civilian attached to the Survey, as it was not worth while to return to Madaripore.

On the 27th, the Calcutta steamer brought Sutherland, the new Collector, to whom Nevile made over charge of the District, and I of my Subdivision, and after a farewell dance given by the Judge, Nevile departed, in company with Westcott, ordered to Cachar. Pelham was thus deprived of his chum, and as I had a month for joining at Moonsheegunge, we arranged to take a trip to the Sunderbuns, in the south of the District. The question how to get a boat—Pelham having just lent his own to Nevile and Westcott—was solved by Malthus, District Superintendent of Police, turning up most opportunely in the evening. He had a fine ten-oared *coss*-boat, which he agreed to lend, and himself join the party. A *coss*-boat is lighter than a *budgerow* or house-boat, and the cabin astern, roofed with matting instead of planking, less roomy. From the cabin roof the ridge-pole extends forward beyond the mast, and spare mats are carried, which, when drawn forward along the pole, afford shelter for the crew at night, or in bad weather. The *manjhi* (captain) stands on the roof astern, and steers with a rudder like a huge paddle. Rowing or sailing before the wind,

these boats are fast ; but being flat-bottomed they cannot be manœuvred like craft with keels.

Our destination was the Baleshwar,¹ a big river running into the Bay of Bengal, one of the many channels through which the united waters of the Gangetic and Assam valleys find their way to the sea. Its current is said to be so strong that the water remains fresh down to the mouth at all states of the tide. Near the sea the banks are covered with dense jungle, the *sunder* trees² standing conspicuously up from the undergrowth. These trees are rather scraggy in appearance, but the wood is in great demand for building boats, bridges, and other structures exposed to the action of water, in which it lasts a long time. Walking through the jungle was in places impeded by a peculiar growth, blunt spikes standing up from the ground, like roots growing the wrong way. Maybe they were roots of the mangrove, which should flourish in such swampy regions. Tracks of game were found—tiger, deer, and rhinoceros,—and alligators were seen. One night two of the party went and sat *inside* a tiger-trap, with a cow and goat fastened outside as bait, to shoot a tiger that had been reported in the neighbourhood ; but the tiger did not appear, and the sportsmen were exposed to the attack of nothing fiercer than the mosquito, which in the Sunderbuns is sufficiently bloodthirsty. After spending a day or two in the wilds, we returned with a fair southerly wind, reaching Burrisaul on the morning of Trinity Sunday, the 11th June.

My joining-time was not up yet ; so with the Commissioner's permission I paid a flying visit to Comilla, where changes had taken place among the residents, even in the short interval since my departure. The *Rathjātra*, or Car Festival, was held while I was there. This is similar to that held at Juggernaut in Orissa on a much larger scale, and consists in dragging a lofty structure on wheels, painted and decorated in a gay and tawdry fashion, from one point to another, and back again after an interval of eight days, the ceremony being emblematic of a journey taken by the god Krishna and his divine mistress Radha or Radhika, to pay a visit to his father-in-law. The return

¹ The "Lord of Strength" ; from the Sanskrit *Bal* (strength) and *Ishwar* (Lord or Master). An appropriate name for a mighty river.

² Hence *Sunder-ban* (Sansk.) Forest of *sunder* trees.

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journey is called the *Puna-jātra*. The car was covered with natives, and there were crowds of people and several elephants, but no accident happened.

I left Comilla on the 29th June, and on Sunday morning (2nd July) came in sight of Dacca. Seen from the river the town looks well—the north bank covered with buildings in various styles of architecture, among which the old walls and turreted gateway of the Lál Bágh, palace of the Nawabs under the Moguls, are most picturesque. A nearer view discloses less pleasing details: the streets are narrow and crooked, many of the houses weather-stained and shabby, the foreshores muddy and untidy. Dacca has been compared to Venice, but the resemblance is not very close. It was more of a city than any station I had yet seen, and the appearance of the big upper-storeyed houses reminded one of Calcutta.

As an official centre, Dacca was a place of some importance. Besides being a Commissioner's Station, with the usual administrative staff of Judge, Collector, Magistrate, and subordinate officers, it was the local headquarters of other special Departments, Education, Telegraph, and Medical. Here were the offices of the Inspector of Schools, Eastern Circle; the Superintendent of Telegraphs, and Deputy Inspector General of Hospitals: notable public institutions were the Dacca College, Mitford Hospital,¹ and Lunatic Asylum, and an Elephant depôt or *Pheelkhānah*, belonging to the Kheddah Department. There was also a wing of the 17th Native Infantry. Of non-officials may be mentioned Messrs. Wiseman, landholder and indigo planter; and Gregg, merchant and agent for the Eastern Bengal Railway steamers running between the Goalundo Terminus and Naraingunge (the port of Dacca, nine miles off by road), who lived at Naraingunge, but was counted as belonging to Dacca; Khajeh Abdool Ghani commonly called Gunny Mya and his son Absanulla,² large zemindars, and leading men among the Mahomedans; and one or two wealthy Hindoos, Greeks, and Armenians belonging to the landed and commercial classes.

¹ Named after its founder, a wealthy civilian, who left the bulk of his property for this purpose. The will was disputed, and a large sum wasted in litigation. The residue was applied to the purposes for which the testator had destined the whole.

² Since honoured with the title of Nawabs of Dacca.

After taking over charge from my native predecessor at Moonsheegunge, I held office at Dacca for some days, but on the 10th July went to settle down in my own quarters. This day also brought a Government letter vesting me with full magisterial powers. Magistrates are graded in three classes, with powers as follow: first class can sentence to two years' imprisonment, and fine up to Rs. 1000; second class, six months' imprisonment, and Rs. 200 fine; third class, one month's imprisonment, and Rs. 50 fine. Magistrates of the first or second class can also hold preliminary inquiry in cases triable by the Court of Session. On first joining, civilians are vested with third-class powers, these are increased to second class on passing the Standard examinations, and after second-class powers have been exercised for a year, full powers are generally given unless withheld for some special reason.

The Subdivisional Officer's house at Moonsheegunge was a thatched bungalow, perched on top of an old Mahomedan fort, built by the Moghuls as a protection against incursions by the Mughls of Arracan. The central part was a round brick structure about 20 feet high, the wall pierced at top with embrasures for cannon and loopholes for musketry, some of which had been dismantled and replaced by masonry balustrades. A flight of steps leading through an arched gateway at the top gave access to the bungalow. The fort stood in a good-sized enclosure, surrounded by a wall with bastions, also pierced for cannon and small arms. The stables and servants' quarters were in this enclosure. The appearance of the place was decidedly picturesque, the old walls covered with ereepers, and bushes growing out of crevices. At top of the fort was a tiny bit of garden, and one or two *jhow* or casuarina trees overshadowed the bungalow and sighed mournfully in the wind, like the distant sea. It was well that the house stood high, for the country round was inundated at this time of year, and the air reeking with moisture. There was a mosque, a tumble-down bridge leading to the public buildings and bazaar—a very small affair—and behold the station of Moonsheegunge. There was not a European in the place, but compatriots were not so far off as at Madaripore: Dacca was within a night's journey, and the Greggs across the river at Naraingunge were still nearer neighbours.

At Moonsheegunge, as in most bazaars and villages of Lower Bengal, there are plenty of masterless paria dogs. These animals—not far

removed from the jackal—lie about basking in the sun, often mangy and diseased, subsist on refuse thrown into the street, or fight with crows and vultures for a share of any offal or carrion. They occupy themselves with their fleas, and bark, or rather utter a sound between a yelp and a howl, at strangers, especially Europeans. At times they become a public nuisance, and their numbers have to be thinned by wholesale slaughter. The killing of dogs by Domes (low-caste men) is a recognised item of municipal charge. Having nothing particular to do one morning, I took my gun and went dog-shooting in the bazaar. Seeing one in a tempting position I let drive, when to my horror the shot was followed by howls of anguish from the inside of a bamboo hut just behind the dog. It had not occurred to me that the shot might penetrate the mat walls as they did, so that a native lying inside got peppered. He vowed he was killed; but an examination by the native doctor showed that the pellets had not even remained in the skin, and he was more frightened than hurt. I told him to come up to the house, and gave him a couple of rupees as shin-plaster, though the shot had taken effect elsewhere. Some time after I heard that the native papers had got hold of this, and published a sensational account of the incident, holding me up to public execration as having caused grievous hurt to an unfortunate villager, and then “basely compromised the matter for the paltry sum of two rupees”! It was no doubt risky to go shooting in the bazaar, but the malicious twist given to the narrative by the Bengali newsmonger is characteristic of the spirit that pervades the native Press, especially when Europeans are concerned.

There was much jungle about the old fort. One day the servants killed a young *bagdás* (civet cat) close under the wall, and in the same place I shot a fine porcupine. I had previously missed a big *bagdás* that came prowling under the cook-room (on top of the fort), probably after kitchen refuse. Another time, seeing a long tail vanish into one of the pipes set to drain the top of the fort, I poked in a bamboo, and soon saw the owner of the tail, a *goolsámp*, or monitor lizard, emerge sprawling from the spout and fall to the ground, some 20 feet. He seemed none the worse, but looked rather astonished, licked his lips with his long snaky tongue, and vanished. In the afternoon another of these lizards, a regular monster, came waddling along under the fort-wall. He

could not have been less than 5 or 6 feet long, and looked like a young alligator. These *goolsámps* were common at Moonsheegunge: the natives have an erroneous idea that they are poisonous; but they have sharp teeth, and could give a nasty bite.

One evening (13th August) a chowkeedar or village watchman came to the house with a gash on his finger and scratches on his ribs, inflicted by a pig. I sent him to the native doctor to get his finger dressed, but believe he used native remedies, which these people often prefer to European treatment. In this case the wound healed, but the man whom I saw afterwards had a stiff joint and deformed finger.

The solitude and depressing atmosphere of Moonsheegunge¹ induced a mild attack of dysentery, and for a time I did not feel good for much. The Doorga Pooja holidays however brought a break of office work and a visit from Lieut. Peart, brother of my old chum in the Police at Brahmanbaria, in whose company the "blues" were soon dispelled. He was on his way back to his regiment in Calcutta, having been to see his brother at Comilla. We had a pleasant time together, and when he left I also went in to Dacca, and spent the rest of the holidays with two young fellows in the Police.

The holidays over, I returned to Moonsheegunge, where things began to look more cheerful—the dismal dampness of the rains giving way to the dry clear atmosphere and bracing freshness of the cold weather. Friday the 3rd November was a holiday, the first day of the *Kartick Baruni*, an annual fair held on the river bank near Moonsheegunge. This fair originated in a religious festival, and the place was chosen as being at the junction of the sacred river Brahmaputra with one of the numerous branches of the Ganges.² It commences with a solemn bathing ceremony in the river at the full moon in the Bengali month of Kartick, lasts about three weeks, and is attended by numerous traders and shopkeepers. Most of the latter come from Dacca, but some are from more distant places,—as cloth and brocade merchants from Amritsir, dealers in sundries from Delli, and others. Mughls from the southward bring *cutch* (catechu) or

¹ See Appendix A.—Ode to Moonsheegunge.

² This may have been the case once; but the point of junction of the two great rivers is now Goalundo, the terminus of the Eastern Bengal Railway, some way to the north-west of Moonsheegunge.

Japan earth and other articles; bamboos are brought from Sylhet and other districts to the north-east, and Sundari wood from the Sunderbuns. Booths cheaply run up with bamboo mats and roughly thatched were arranged in lines parallel to the river, and the fair soon presented a busy appearance, the shops doing a lively business, the streets thronged, and the river-side crowded with boats. A party of Police was told off to keep order and look after numerous light-fingered gentry who infested the fair. With so large a concourse it was also necessary to take special sanitary precautions and insist on the observance of regulations in matters of conservancy which, without help from the Police, it might have been difficult to enforce.

A project was on foot for a pig-sticking meet on the Tippera (east) side of the Megna, south of Daoodkandi, said to be a good hog-hunting country, and the Collector had asked me to reconnoitre the ground; so one day having no Cutcherry I started early, and by daybreak was crossing the main channel of the river, at this time of the year calm as a mill-pond. Landing at a place called Kalipoora, I found the banks high, and the country promising in appearance,—broad *maidáns*, now covered with waving rice-crops, and patches of grass and jungle, just the places for pig. The accounts given by the natives were also encouraging; and altogether there were fair prospects of sport in a few weeks' time, when the crops would be ent and the fields dry enough for riding.

On Monday the 4th December I left Moonsheegunge for a few days, to investigate a dispute relating to some *churs* or alluvial formations in the Pudda or Kirtinássa, a great river formed by the junction of the Ganges and Brahmaputra below Goalundo, in the southern part of my jurisdiction. In this region of many waters the channels are constantly changing, banks being washed away in one direction and land thrown up in another, while in mid-stream islands are perpetually being formed, diluviated and re-formed by the capricious action of the current, which in its course to the sea is charged with the washings of hundreds of miles of fertile soil. This state of things gives much employment to the officers of Land Revenue, that backbone of Indian finance. Where land is washed away, the owner claims to have his quota of revenue proportionately reduced, while in cases of alluvion additional revenue is assessed upon the estates to which the land has accreted. This

is the rule for riparian changes ; but where islands arise in the stream the new formation becomes Government property, unless the channel between the island and the mainland be *fordable at any season of the year*. If it is so fordable, the island is held to belong to the nearest estate. Claims of this nature are keenly prosecuted or contested, for the alluvial soil, though not producing much for the first few years, is rich, and in time (unless again washed away) becomes very valuable. Some cases are intricate, and entail careful measurement and reference to old maps and other documents. Much of the oral evidence tendered is untrustworthy, witnesses being chiefly concerned in supporting the case of their own party. This branch of a Collector's duty, dealing with settlement of the Land Revenue, is popular with men who are fond of sport and outdoor exercise. It has been said that "Settlement work means snipe-shooting"; and certainly it may be made to include a good deal of this sort of pastime.

There was a slight earthquake on the evening of the 15th December,—a swinging motion rather than a shock. It was felt more severely at Dacca and Naraingunge.

The Dacca Races were now on,—an annual event of some importance on the Turf in Eastern Bengal, liberally supported by Guni Mya and his son Ahsanulla, and other sporting residents, European and native, amongst whom our lively Collector figured conspicuously. A good deal of money was given in prizes, and one or two owners kept European jockeys.

After the Races came the Christmas holidays, during which it was arranged to go pig-sticking to Kalipoora. The party included Lyon, Dawson a subaltern of the regiment, Stratford of the Police, and Gregg from Naraingunge, by reason of his inches commonly called the "Long 'Un." Two *budgerows* were taken instead of tents, one a big schooner-rigged vessel to serve as a mess-boat, the other rather smaller. A *budgerow* or houseboat is very comfortable for river-travelling, not unlike a Nile *dahabieh* in appearance, with two large cabins (sitting and bed-room) and bath-room astern. Servants and crew dispose themselves outside on the cabin-roof and fore-deck, sheltered from the weather by bamboo screens or tarpaulins. Separate cook-boats are usually taken, in which cook and table-servants live. *Budgerows* are slow : if time is an object, it is well to choose a lighter ship.

The rendezvous was at Naraingunge, where Gregg joined the party, the others driving out from Dacca. The flotilla was sent round by water, and the horses crossed the Megna in separate boats, in charge of their attendants. We embarked after dinner, and next morning (27th December) found ourselves on the big river, in sight of Moonsheegunge. The weather was brilliant, the air cool, and the river like glass. There was hardly any wind, and during our slumbers the crew had been content to smoke the beloved hubble-bubble, and let the vessel drift. When the Sahibs awoke, more energy was displayed: the cook-boat took the lumbering craft in tow and improved the pace a little. At length, tired of this slow progress, we went ahead in a smaller boat, leaving the *budgerow* to follow. Arrived at our destination, we found that the horses had been comfortably huddled in the bazaar, and were none the worse for their voyage. The (six) elephants were also to the fore, so mounting our horses we made a start. The only noteworthy event of the day was a turn-up with a good-sized boar, who decidedly had the best of it. Gregg, first after him, came to grief in a ditch; Dawson was thrown in lunging at him as he charged on the near side; and Lyon, who just then came up, was also thrown. Stratford and I alone remained, and did nothing to retrieve the fortune of the field. To tell the truth, the boar got into a narrow awkward place, and charged so viciously that I hesitated to ride in at him. "Dick" was rather blown, and I did not feel confident of being able to stop the pig's attack, and so he got away.

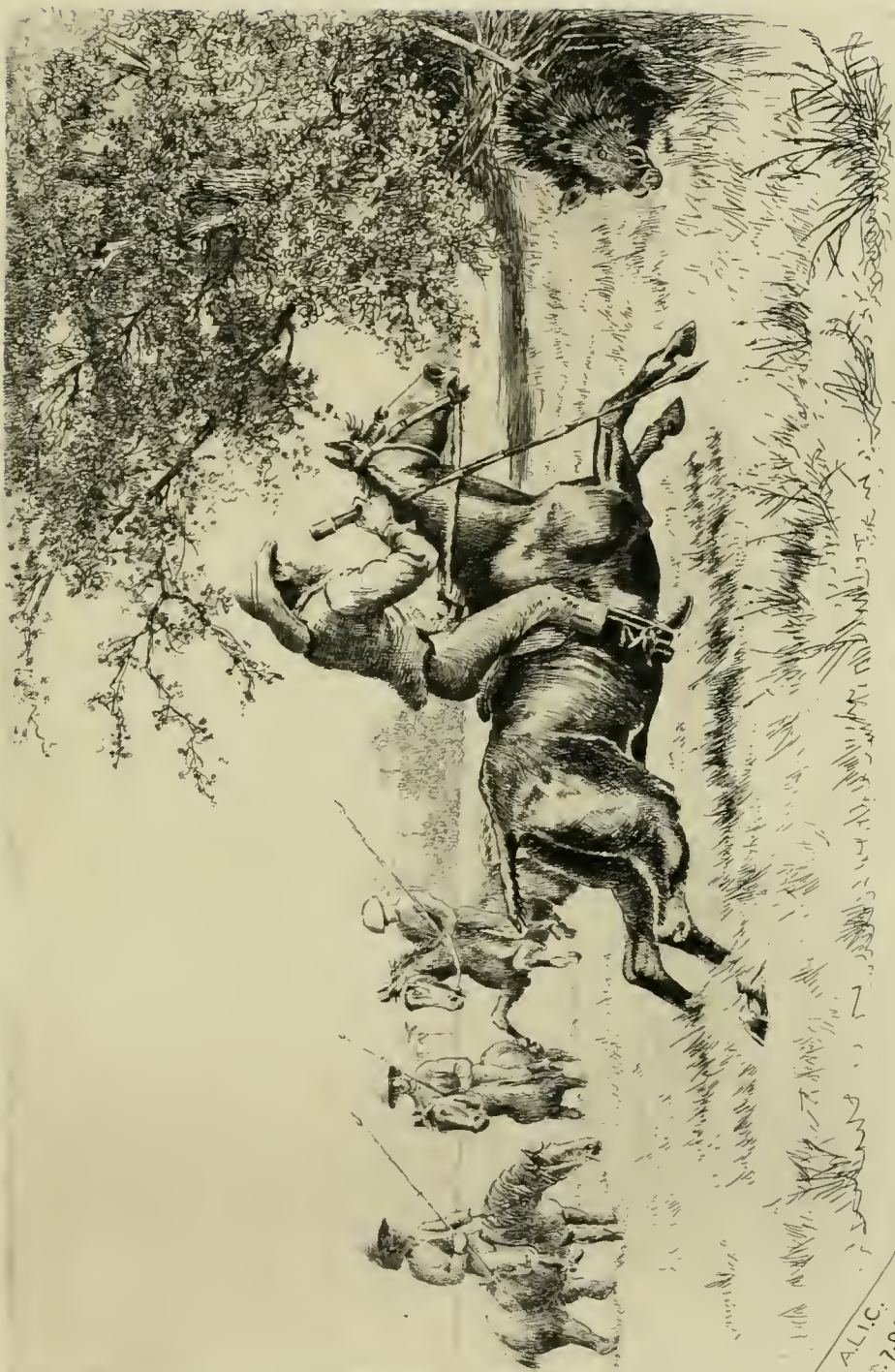
Next day was a blank, one pig only viewed, and that at a distance. On the 29th we moved a little south to a place called Das Ani, to try new ground. In the course of the day I got first spear off a middling-sized boar, for which "Dick" cared no more than if it had been a dog; perhaps he thought it was one. Nothing else all day. During the night our party was reinforced by the Collector, and Place the District Superintendent of Police from Dacca. A sow only was speared on the 30th, and next morning Dawson had to return to Dacca. In a new beat two sows and a little boar were found: the sows escaped, Place and his horse coming to grief in a muddy field. The boar broke back, but was again turned out, and Gregg and I had a good race for the spear, which fell to me by a fluke, the pig jinking just as Gregg was about to

deliver his thrust. After tiffin under a tree, cheroots and pipes in full blast, came news of more pig. Two little boars were ridden and killed, the Collector getting first spear of one, Gregg of the other. During the afternoon Gregg and I, cantering side by side, had a ridiculous upset. A tethered bullock first collided with Gregg's horse, then cannoned against mine, flooring both, and being itself sent sprawling on its back. However the ground being soft no harm was done, and we soon picked ourselves up again. Towards evening a big boar was turned out of a little patch of jungle and soon made a porcupine of, Lyon taking first spear in workmanlike style. I got a dig at him before the last kick was given, whereby my favourite spear was broken, the weight of the boar as he at length rolled over snapping the shaft clean at the head, which had to be cut out of the carcase. This was the second tusker killed—a very fair pig, measuring about thirty-six inches, and the Boonwa beaters had his head off in no time.

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On New Year's Day we started early, and beat for some time without success. At last a fine boar was found and run into heavy jungle, out of which he obstinately refused to break. After sulking for some time he came out, and Lyon got the spear. I had gone to bring up the elephants, and when I came back he had again taken refuge in a small but dense thicket. The elephants were put in, with the Boonwas and their dogs, and presently the boar stalked forth, looking very grim, with Lyon's spear broken in his body, and his back covered with a quantity of brushwood. "He who hesitates is lost" was illustrated on this occasion, and the pig would have again got away had not Lyon ridden in and finished him while the rest of us were thinking about it. This was a fine tusker of some thirty-eight inches, the biggest killed yet.

After tiffin, some heavy village-jungle having been drawn blank, and this being our last day, it was determined to try some lighter cover that could be beaten quickly. Putting the elephants through one piece, we were all riding in long grass when a sow broke, and almost directly after up jumped a boar under "Dick's" nose, which I rode into a little patch, and following, suddenly found myself close to him in the grass.



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Not fancying the situation, I made a wild dig at him and cleared out. He broke again; I pursued and gave him two prods, neither of much consequence apparently, as they did not make him turn. Once more he got into cover, and seemed determined to stay there. We followed up however, and presently coming to a pool surrounded by jungle, I rode into the water and found the pig "playing 'possum" under the bank. I poked him in the face with my spear, at which he grunted, *ugh! ugh!* but luckily for me did not charge. In trying to scramble up the steep bank "Dick" fell right back with me in the mud, and the pig was again lost sight of. Gregg now joined me, and we hunted about for him without success. Seeing vultures around, I began to think my spear might have done more than I had imagined, and that the pig was lying dead; but there was no trace of the animal. Presently we heard say that a pig had been run out in another direction, and going to see if this was true we met the others returning from the kill of a very good pig, with his head slung on a bamboo. Lyon, coming upon him by chance, had given him a spear, followed up, and then had a hard fight with him in the open single-handed, no one else being near. One charge was so fierce that the spear-head was bent, and the spear wrenched out of Lyon's hand: a hole was made in the boar's skull, yet the gallant brute made good his attack, and charged right up to the chest of old "Crazy Jane," a fiddle-headed Waler with an ewe-neck, rat's tail, and a queer temper, but staunch and unflinching like her master—a first-rate pig-sticker. Lyon was tired out, and no wonder. The boar was generally voted to be that pursued and lost by me,¹ and by the rule of "first blood" I got the skull. The said rule often operates unfairly, as in this case, Lyon having borne the brunt of the battle. This was the last event of the meet.

On Sunday the 7th January while staying with the Greggs at Naraingunge, I heard that during the night there had been a row in the bazaar between the Police and some Chinamen, and found nine of the latter in custody at the Police Station, where the matter was enquired into. Mughs and Chinese come up the Megna during the cold season in *lorchas*² and junks from the Burmese coast and the Straits, bringing

¹ The pig was found to have lost an eye—an injury that might have been caused by my spear-thrust in the face by the jungly pool. Possibly, too, this accounted for his not charging.

² Like junks, but smaller.

catechu, cotton, teak planks and other goods, and taking back manufactured articles, betel-nuts, sugar, salt and tobacco. They do not stay much beyond February, having to get away before the weather breaks, when the Bay would be dangerous for such vessels. These are queer-looking craft, the foremast generally stayed well forward, the mainmast nearly upright, and mizen raking aft over the stern. Stem and stern are much higher than the waist, in some junks quite lofty : great staring eyes and grotesque devices are painted along the broadside, and all decorations are in the gaudiest colours. The sails, usually of matting, with ribs running across, are hoisted by windlasses from the deck. In some *lorchas* however the European method of rigging is adopted to a certain extent, and sail-cloth substituted for matting.

Moonsheegunge was badly off for roads ; but a track ran along the river towards Feringhi Bazaar (Frankish Bazaar)—an old Portuguese settlement, now an unimportant village—which had been commenced some years before, and extended up to the said Bazaar by my predecessor. The embankment was not wide enough for carts, and there were many unbridged gaps ; so the dry season having now fairly set in and labour being plentiful after the harvest, coolies were collected, and on the 10th of January work commenced, one gap being filled up, and arrangements made for bridging the others.

On the 13th January I went for a day or two to Dacca, and while there visited the College with one of the Professors, and attended a lecture. One boy being asked whose son Cardinal Wolsey was, replied : “The son of a murderer.” He meant a *butcher*, but perhaps thought the other epithet sounded better, and might carry extra marks. The “educated” Bengali delights in using big words, and the effect is often comical. My visit to the College started a report that I was about to be appointed to the Education Department,—an instance of the very slight foundation on which Indian gossip sometimes rests.

On the 17th Lyon left Dacca to join the Commissioner and Simson, Judge of Mymensingh, in a shooting trip to the *chours* of the Brahmaputra in the north of the Mymensingh District, a noted haunt of tigers and other game. There were wild beasts about Dacca too. Leopards were reported near the Police Station at Naraingunge, and a monkey belonging to the Greggs was carried off by one of these animals. A few nights

after, a small leopard actually got into Gregg's verandah, and was killed by him and his brother with a small hatchet and a hammer, the first weapons that came to hand.

On the 18th February I started on tour. The Collector had lent a comfortable tent, and for moving about I had a guard-boat or *girdwári*, smaller than a *cox*-boat, but long and speedy, and a good deal bigger than the dinghies taken up the Goomtee. *Girdwáris* are attached to Thanahs, and used as patrol-boats by the Police in the Eastern districts. Our course lay southward across the Pudda which, like a sea in the rains and often dangerous to country boats, was now calm and placid. One object in visiting this part of the Subdivision was to make local enquiry into disputes regarding *chur* lands so frequent along the big rivers. The country south of the Pudda was not unlike that about Kalipoora,—open *maidán*, with clumps of trees and jungle, usually containing a village. The land was well cultivated, but there was good cover for pigs; and from “rootlings” in the ground it was evident that these animals were about. And not pigs only; for on the 21st February a village chowkeedar brought in the corpse of a man who had been wounded the evening before by a wild buffalo and died that morning. It was a ghastly sight,—the side of the head smashed in, one leg laid open to the bone, and other wounds besides. It appeared that the brute's attack had been quite unprovoked. The grassy *churs* and riparian lands of the rivers in Eastern Bengal are favourite grazing grounds for the village cattle, and in such places wild buffaloes are not uncommon. Sometimes the wild bulls consort with the tame cows, and to this the *gowálas* (herdsmen) do not object, as it improves the breed. Occasionally, however, a savage bull remains with the village beasts and will not be driven off, when it becomes dangerous for the herdsmen. Even tame buffaloes are not always safe: as a rule they do not molest natives, but dislike Europeans. The animal that killed this unfortunate man was perhaps one of those solitary “hermit” bulls, driven from the herd by stronger animals, that become morose and savage, and attack whatever crosses their path.

Local enquiries completed, on the 23rd we moved on to Mulfatgunge Police Thanah where a halt was made for holding Cutcherry, the tent and most of the *amla* (clerks) having been sent on. Next day was mostly taken up with office work, which had got rather into arrears

during my tour among the *churs*. On Sunday the 25th I started to look at the surrounding country. The Thanah stands on a *khāl* (creek) running into the big river: striking inland under the guidance of a native I began exploring, and found much jungle, with here and there large tanks and other traces of man's handiwork, half-hidden by rank vegetation, showing that the neighbourhood had once been more populous. Not far off, at a place called Rajnugger, was a remarkable pile of dilapidated buildings, the remains of a splendid residence erected by Raja Rajbullubh, a Hindoo Deputy Governor under the Nawabs in the time of the Mogul Government, who is said to have amassed vast wealth during his term of office.¹ The ancient palace, with clustering pinnacles standing boldly up from its flat surroundings, made a conspicuous landmark, visible even from across the Pudda. It is now a thing of the past, having been washed away, with many an acre of fertile soil, by the destructive current of the river, whose second name of Kirtinassa, or "Shrine Destroyer," is ominously significant of the devastation that is constantly going on along its banks. At the time of my visit the buildings were near the river, but not so close as to suggest imminent danger. Among the old pinnacles and turrets, nooks and corners of the structure, were numbers of wild pigeons (Blue rock), of which we shot a dozen in about an hour, and might have got many more had the guns been held straighter.

I broke up camp on Sunday the 4th March, and started for the northern Thanahs of my Subdivision. On the 6th a man was sent in by the Police on a charge of murder, having killed his wife the day before in a fit of rage, after a petty domestic quarrel. He made a full confession, and seemed to take the matter pretty coolly. Being destined for the lock-up at Moonsheegunge, he was taken along in custody in my boat. On the 7th we re-crossed the Pudda, and nearing the Subdivision got a fine breeze, which carried us up to Moonsheegunge on the afternoon of the 9th. Crossing over to Naraingunge, my next halting-place, I took

¹ A great portion of the money was conveyed out of the district by Rajbullubh's son Kishen Dass, who was supposed to have taken it to Fort William. It was in search of this treasure, it is said, that Suraj-u-Doulah commenced hostilities against the English which ended in their obtaining possession of the country in 1757. *History of the Dacca District*.

up the charge of wife-murder, the inquiry into which had meantime been completed, and witnesses sent in by the Police. This being a capital offence, triable by the Court of Session, the proceedings before me were preliminary. The case was clear, the man confessing that in a sudden fit of anger with his wife for not having his dinner ready when wanted he had struck her a fatal blow. The painful part of the affair was that most of the witnesses were his near relatives, one being his own mother. After the old woman had given her deposition, as a matter of form she was told to point out the accused. For some time she would not; but at last, turning to the wretched man, she fell weeping on his neck. Yet, when this case came up at the Sessions, the witnesses all recanted and declared that the woman had died of cholera! The Judge summoned me as committing magistrate, and on my evidence gave the witnesses three months each for perjury, but the murderer got off. Such a failure of justice is not uncommon in a country where false evidence is so rife, and shows the difficulty of getting at the truth of any matter that comes before the authorities when there is a motive for concealing it, especially if the enquiry has to go through several stages. On this occasion the man taken red-handed and sent in at once confessed, and the witnesses told the truth to the Magistrate; but before the case reached the Judge the man had reconsidered his statement and the witnesses had been tampered with, so the prosecution failed. There was medical evidence no doubt; but the weather was hot, and the body had to be sent in a long distance by boat, so it probably arrived (as often happens) in such a state that a *post-mortem* examination could have no useful results.

About this time the Commissioner's shooting party returned from the Brahmaputra *churs*, the bag of the three guns including twenty-two tigers.

Good Friday (March 30th) being a holiday, the opportunity was taken to make local enquiry into a claim to a *chur* in the river near Feringhi Bazaar, which had been preferred against Government. The Assistant Collector, his clerks, and the *meokhtars* (attorneys) for the claimants all went to the spot in boats, and the proceedings attracted a knot of villagers. The point at issue was very simple, and the conclusion soon came to that the *chur* was Government property, and the claim set up.

by private parties untenable. Nevertheless the rival pleaders argued their clients' case at length, with much heat and eloquence, which seemed rather waste of time: perhaps they thought that as they were paid to talk I was paid to listen, so that it was all right.

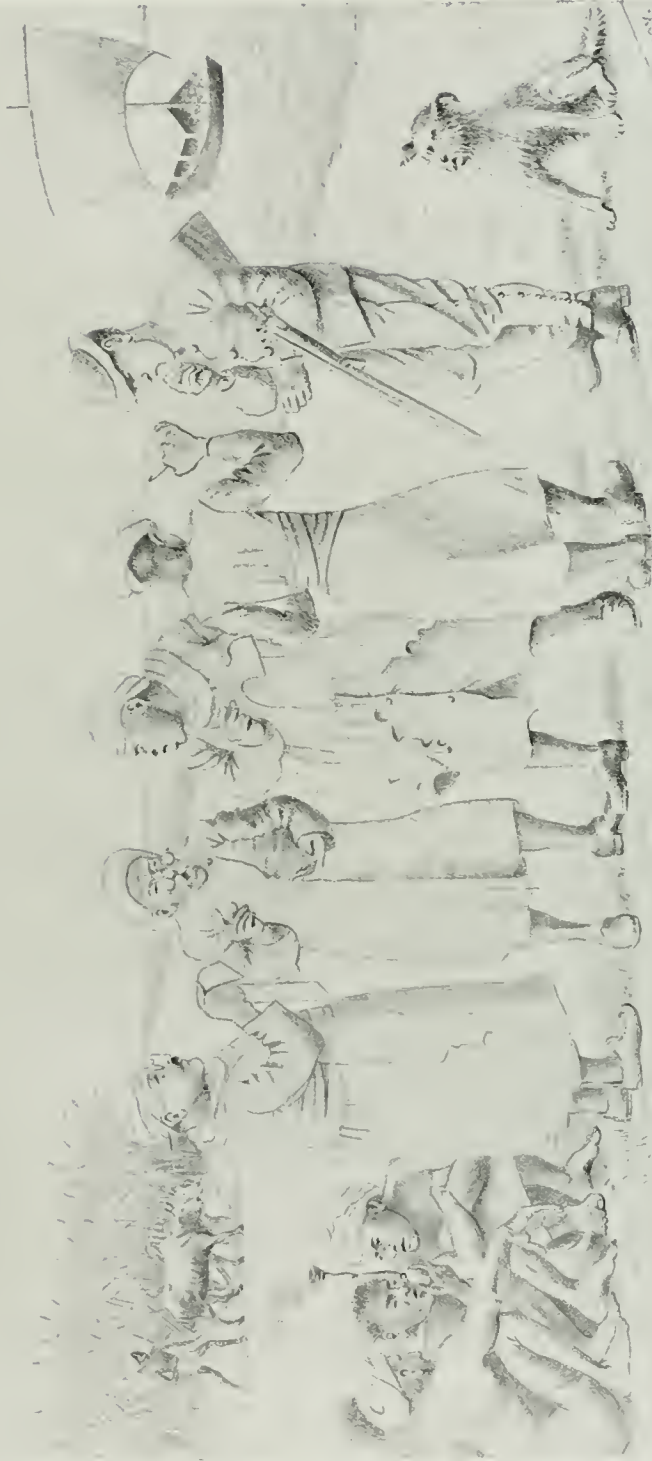
Having now exercised full magisterial powers for some months, and held charge of Subdivisions for more than a year, I had for some time been hoping for a step up the ladder, and tantalizing rumours of promotion had been flying about; but week after week went by, and nothing appeared in the Gazette. At last on the 7th April I received a "Service" cover, with the long hoped-for appointment to "officiate until further orders as Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector of Dacca," and promptly wrote off to Neville, asking when I should join.

This morning, while making my usual road inspection, I met two men leading a lunatic by a chain, one before and one behind, the unlucky man in the middle, and sent them in to Moonsheegunge. Insanity is not uncommon in Bengal, and people afflicted in this way are brought before the Magistrate, who has them medically examined. If certified to be dangerous, the matter is reported for Government orders, and they are sent to an Asylum. Harmless lunatics may be made over to their friends; but these are often unwilling to take charge of them.

Next day I had to go to a place called Aot Shahi, in my capacity of Sub-Registrar of Deeds, to attest the execution of a power of attorney by a person who for some reason was excused attendance at Court.¹ The country traversed showed signs of having been the site of a populous city, by tradition older than Dacca, of which the only traces now remaining are sundry mounds and quantities of bricks; in parts indeed the ground is almost all brick; and the place is said to be worked as a regular quarry for ready-made bricks, which being taken to Dacca are again used for building. There is a legend that in ancient times the Hindoo Raja Bikramaditya held his Court for some years in the south of the Dacca District, and gave his name to Bikrampore, the Pergunnah (Revenue division) in which Moonsheegunge is situated. When this part of Bengal was conquered by the Mahomedans, the Raja Bollál Sen is said to have been reigning in Bikrampore, and one of the mounds is

¹ Such attendance is dispensed with in the case of native ladies (*purdah-nishin*), who may not appear in public. The exemption is also allowed to persons of rank.

10
The Great
The Great



pointed out as the remains of his residence, and known by the name of “Bari Bollál Sen.” Near this is a solitary *sál* tree,¹ supposed to be the only specimen in the neighbourhood, which according to local tradition sprang from one of the posts (of *sál* timber) to which the Raja’s elephants were picketed. The story may or may not be true, but there is the tree.

The evening brought notes from the Commissioner and Collector, telling me to join at once. I hastened to obey these welcome orders.

¹ The *sál* tree (*Shorea robusta*) is common in the forests of Assam and Western Bengal, and its timber is excellent for buildings, railway sleepers and other purposes. It is also the prevailing tree in the great Madhupore jungle, which extends northward from Dacca into the Mymensingh District; but its presence in the south or alluvial portion of the Dacca District is quite exceptional.

APPENDIX A

ODE TO MOONSHEEGUNGE

I.

O Moonsheegunge, thou spot beloved
Of paddy-bird and duck ;
Where all the land is water,
And all the water's muck ;

II.

Where never, by remotest chance,
A Sahib shows his nose ;
And where there's no society
But that of Ram Nath Bose !

III.

What have I done, relentless Fate,
That thou shouldst stick me here,
Remote from horses, dogs, and men,
From all I hold so dear ?

IV.

As I sit in the verandah
A-smoking my cheroot,
I come to the conclusion
I'm a miserable brute.

V.

There's Jones has gone to Shikarpore,
There's Smith at Spinst'rabad,
While I am left to linger here
And probably go mad.

VI.

To post a European here
Is cruelty refined ;—
'Tis rigorous imprisonment
With solitude combined.

VII.

O may some future ruler
In charity expunge
Thy name from each Gazette and Map,
O slimy Moonsheegunge !

MOONSHEEGUNGE,
1865.

CHAPTER VIII

DACCA.—1866-7

On the 9th April, 1866, I bade adieu to Moonsheegunge, and crossed over to Naraingunge, where I was heartily welcomed, and congratulated by the Greggs on my promotion. Next morning I rode in to Dacca, and was soon domiciled with Place the Policeman in a house by the river. Meantime Lyon had been married in Calcutta, and on the 20th arrived with Mrs. L. in a *budgerow* bound for Moonsheegunge, to which Sub-division he had been appointed.

Shortly after there was a change in the regiment, the 17th N.I. being relieved by the 5th Native Light Infantry from Sylhet. The men were quartered at Foley's Mills, a large building on the river, designed for a factory, that had been taken by Government for military purposes. Formerly the sepoy's occupied cantonments north of the town towards the Race Course, but these proving unhealthy, they were moved to the old Mahomedan palace of the Lál Bágh, and huddled on the rampart overlooking the river, which they occupied during the Mutiny. Here took place the "Battle of Dacca," the subjoined account of which and of events leading up to and immediately following the disturbance was given by Mr. Brennand, Principal of the College, who was in Dacca at the time, and took notes of what was going on.¹ After the Mutiny the Lál Bágh was made over to the Police, the military being transferred to the Mills.

There was a rather sporting atmosphere about Dacca, and among the local Nimrods was young Stratford of the Police, who on the 11th May borrowed some of Guni Mya's elephants and took me for a beat in the

¹ See Appendix B.



jungle that extends northward from Dacca into the Mymensingh District, where it joins the great Madhupore Forest, running up towards the Garrow Hills. This jungle is considered malarious, and residents on its borders are pale, thin, and generally affected with spleen. In the palmy days of Dacca, when the muslin trade flourished, and English French and Dutch factories were in full operation, these tracts, now overgrown with jungle, were cultivated and used as bleach-fields. The rich merchants, their assistants, and other residents all lived here, as far as possible from the native town, which was avoided as unhealthy. The Dacca-Mymensingh Railway passes through this country now, and has no doubt made changes : in those days it was a favourite resort of Dacca sportsmen, and a likely place for game, from a tiger to a snipe. We came across deer, and also saw some black partridge. This bird is dark, though not exactly black, with handsomely marked plumage, and more esteemed for the table than the grey partridge, which resembles the English variety.

On the 13th May I accompanied the Collector on a visit of ceremony to Khajeh Abdool Ghani (Guni Mya), who lived in a fine house by the river, handsomely furnished in the European style. Additions were being made, and when finished the building looked really imposing, especially from the river ; but the works were then only in progress. Guni Mya was a great factor in Dacca society, member of the Municipal Committee, a liberal supporter of charities, profusely hospitable, and a great patron of sport. His elephants were always available for shooting or pig-sticking parties ; he kept an English jockey and a racing stable, and had just bought a lot of foxhounds originally imported for the Mymensingh pack. His son Ahsanulla, a stont good-tempered young fellow, played the harmonium, dabbled in photography, and was like his father a good specimen of the Anglicised native.

The 24th (Queen's Birthday) was marked by a dinner at the Commissioner's, when Her Majesty's health was loyally drunk, followed by that of the late John Company, which was warmly responded to by the Addiscombe and Haileybury men present. Finally, Buckland proposed the "Competition Wallahs," coupling the toast with my name to my no small consternation, as I was not prepared for such a distinction.

About this time there was a second pig-sticking expedition to Kalipoorā, the hunters being Lyon from Moonsheegunge, Stratford of the Police, and Professor M. of the Dacca College, a lively young Irishman just out from home, known to his intimates as "Corney Delaney," after a character in one of Lever's novels. The results were not great; the most noteworthy event being an encounter with a sow, which got hold of the toe of Corney's boot, and was laid low by his lance. The sportsmen on their return were mercilessly chaffed about this incident, which was recorded in rhyme, and published in the "Oriental Sporting Magazine."¹

The "Joint" at a Sudder Station is the senior magistrate next to the District Officer; takes petitions, hears reports, distributes cases among subordinate magistrates, reserving some of the more important for his own file, and generally deals with all criminal work arising in any part of the District not included in a Subdivision. In Dacca there were two Subdivisions, Moonsheegunge and Manikgunge, and with a full staff at headquarters the duties devolving on the Joint Magistrate, usually a hard-worked official, were not very heavy, and seemed even light after a Subdivision, where the officer in charge is as a rule single-handed. As Deputy Collector, the Joint ranks next to the Collector in Revenue matters, and can exercise all or any of that officer's powers that may be delegated to him. In short, in both capacities, Magisterial and Revenue, the Joint is the District Officer's right-hand man, and does all sorts of miscellaneous work. Amongst other matters made over to me was the examination of a batch of applicants for permission to practise as *mookhtars* (attorneys or Revenue agents) in the Collectorate Courts. At that time, suits under the Rent-law were heard and decided by the Collector and his Assistants,² and *mookhtars* were employed by the parties. None could plead without a licence from the Collector, who before granting it had to satisfy himself that the candidates were qualified, and acquainted with the Revenue and Rent-laws. *Vakils* or regular pleaders rank higher than *mookhtars*, and usually appear in civil suits, though in important rent cases they do not despise a brief. Most people who have had experience of our Courts in India think that

¹ See Appendix C.—"A Day at Shikarpore."

² Rent Suits are now triable by the Civil Courts.

there are too many *rakils* and *mookhtars*, whose ever increasing numbers tend to foster litigation.

In the rainy season the atmosphere in the town was often close and stuffy, but by the river the air was comparatively fresh and sweet. The "Buckland Bund" was a fine embankment faced with masonry that owed its existence to the energy and public spirit of the Commissioner, after whom it was named. Natives are not often open-handed when money is needed for a public purpose; but at Dacca Guni Mya set a good example; there were many rich men in the city, and all had a wholesome respect for the Commissioner, and dreaded to incur his displeasure. A public subscription was started and funds were soon obtained, Government also contributing, for what promised to be an ornament to the town, and a boon to the residents in the shape of a spacious promenade overlooking the river with its busy traffic. The Bund was not yet finished, but a commencement had been made near the *Sudder Ghât* or principal landing place, and it was to be extended gradually along the river-front. A bandstand was erected by the Municipal Committee, and military music was often added to the other attractions of this place of public resort.

On the 18th August we went over to pay the Lyons a visit at Moonsheegunge. They seemed very comfortable in my old quarters, with plenty of live-stock in the shape of tame rabbits and dogs, not to mention the horses stabled in the enclosure below. A beat was organised in honour of our visit, resulting in the death of a fine porcupine, which was enveloped in a crust of clay and baked gypsy-fashion. The cooking was not quite a success, as the quills did not come off clean, but the flesh was white and nice enough, with a slightly aromatic flavour.

Sunday the 9th September was noteworthy for the presence of Bishop Cotton, on a Visitation tour from Calcutta. The church was fuller than usual, a bishop's visit being no every day occurrence. In the morning Dr. Cotton preached and administered the Sacrament: in the evening the pulpit was occupied by his chaplain. Less than a month after, on the 8th October, came the news that the Bishop had been drowned at Kooshtea, then the terminus of the Eastern Bengal Railway. He had been on shore in the evening, it appears, and was returning on board the Lieut.-Governor's yacht *Rhotas* in which he was travelling; the gang-

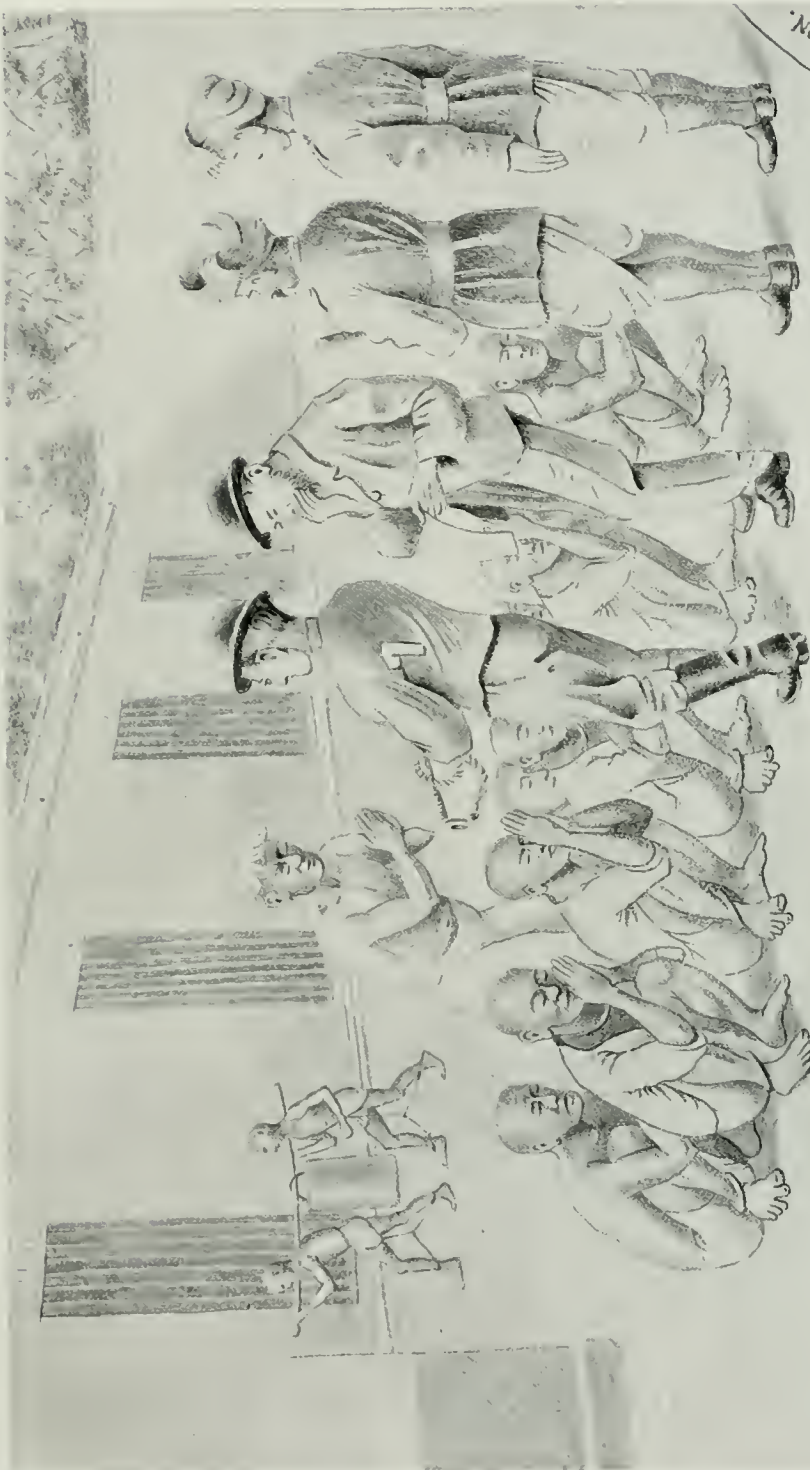
way between the vessel and the bank not being properly protected or lighted, he missed his footing in the dark and fell into the water. The current at this place is dangerously rapid; and the body was not recovered. Dr. Cotton was generally esteemed and beloved; and the news of his sudden death made the more painful impression at Dacca from his having so lately visited the station.

Another of the Joint's multifarious duties was charge of the Jail. Like everything else connected with District administration, jails are under the general control of the District Magistrate as chief executive officer; but all details of supervision and management are left to a subordinate, who is immediately responsible to and corresponds direct with the Inspector-General of Jails. Formerly jails were put in charge of Sub Magistrates, often the Joint, but nowadays the Civil Surgeon of a station is generally also Superintendent of the District Jail and not only in medical charge as he used to be. Central Jails are placed under special Superintendents, who may or may not be medical men.

In the easy-going old days jails were by all accounts not always very severe penitentiaries. The slang term for a house of correction among the criminal classes was "the house of the father-in-law"; and there is a story that a Magistrate going to his Jail one morning found a discharged prisoner at the gate weeping bitterly. Asked the cause of his grief, the poor man replied that he had just been *turned out for no fault*.

Things are different now: there is more red-tape, stricter discipline, and the aim is to make prison labour as irksome as possible, especially for short-term prisoners. At the same time the convicts are carefully looked after; and with regular work, good food, and medical supervision it is certain that many men are much better in health on leaving than entering jail. Once a fortnight all prisoners are paraded and weighed: if a man is found to lose weight persistently he is concluded to be out of health, and is either sent to hospital, put to lighter labour, or otherwise treated. Similar parades are held when the Magistrate or other official visitor comes to the Jail, so prisoners who have anything to say or complaints to make are given the opportunity of doing so. A Visitors' Book is kept, in which remarks are made by inspecting officers, and copies of these (with explanations from the Jail Superintendent, if necessary) are sent to the Inspector-General of Jails.

JAIL INSPECTION.
- 8 10 -
1871-95.



The Dacca Jail was large, with accommodation for some 400 prisoners, and was said to occupy the site of what had been extensive stabling in the time of the Nawábs. It was in the heart of the city, close to the Chowk Bazaar or market place, and adjoining the Jail was the Lunatic Asylum. The Jailor, a half-caste named Roderick, drew a salary of Rs.100 a month, with commission on the sale of articles manufactured in the Jail. These included dusters, fancy cloths for *purdahs* (curtains), table-covers, etc.; rattan chairs and *morahs* (stools); furniture; mustard-oil and oil-cake; *surkhi* (brick-dust) mixed with lime and used for stucco plaster; and ropes. Gunny bags were formerly made, but were driven out of the market by the machine-made article. The prison has since been raised to the status of a Central Jail, receiving prisoners from surrounding districts.

Examination week was in November, when a number of junior officers came to Dacca, and we had a tolerable house-full. The Dacca Races followed in December, and the only other noteworthy local event before close of the year was the marriage on the 26th December of the Adjutant of the regiment to the eldest daughter of Mr. Brennand, Principal of the Dacca College.

1867.

New Year's Day was kept with a cricket-match and Bachelors' Ball. On the 5th January we gave a picnic at the Old Sepoy Lines near the cricket-field; and on the 7th there was a dinner and dance at the Mess. The Collector being away in Calcutta on short leave, I was just now in charge of his office in addition to my own duties.

In February the hog-spear was again in request: it came about in this way. Lyon, my successor at Moonsheegunge, was a keen sportsman as well as an active magistrate; and in the course of touring up and down in the Subdivision had come upon a jungly *chur* in the river Pudda that seemed an ideal hunting ground, being a favourite haunt of the unclean animal. A pig-sticking party had been talked of for some time; the question was, where; and Lyon's report decided the matter. Arrangements were soon made; tents, servants, baggage and quadrupeds sent off in advance, and the early morning of February 7th saw us at

Naraingunge on board the Kooshtea steamer *Prince Alfred*. It was a lovely day, all the pleasanter after a spell of dull wet weather : the river trip was very enjoyable, and passed off with no more remarkable incident than the falling overboard of two of the crew, who were however picked up none the worse for their ducking. The party included Buckland, Wiseman the great indigo planter and zemindar, Lyon, and Place the Policeman. About 3 p.m. the white tops of the tents came in sight, glancing above the tall grass jungle of Baboo Chur, and in the distance, on the south bank of the river, the pinnacles of the Rajnugger temples showed conspicuous on the horizon. The tents were pitched on a broad sandy stretch between two *churs*, the intervening channel being dry at this season. Arrived in camp, Lyon and I rode out to reconnoitre. We saw three pigs at a distance, and came upon a tiger-path in a muddy creek ; but the cover was dense and extensive,—heavy *null* (reed) jungle, higher than an elephant's back. My steed "Kate," a little stud-bred mare belonging to the Collector of which I had the use while he was away, could hardly push through ; and at last getting fairly entangled reared up, whereby I slipped off behind. I then went in front of the mare, and throwing all my weight on the reeds tried to force a passage for her. Lyon was calling to me close by, but there was no trace of a path. At last after a deal of trouble we cleared the thicket and returned to camp, where we refreshed ourselves with a dip in the creek where the boats were lying. The others also returned about this time, having been out prospecting on the elephants ; and soon after the party assembled at dinner in Buckland's fine roomy tent, a luxurious banqueting pavilion. the canvas walls giving just enough protection from the night air, at this season keen and piercing on the *churs*, and producing an agreeable temperature, which could be regulated by raising or lowering any of the tent doors.

Next morning (February 8th) was brilliant with a north-east wind, deliciously cold and bracing. After breakfast Buckland, Wiseman, and Place took the field on elephants, Lyon mounted "Crazy Jane," and I got on "Dick." The beat commenced, but results were poor. The *null* jungle was so thick and abundant, that the odds were all in favour of the game. A little sow was turned out, but having only to rush across an open space between two covers, got away. Afterwards a fair-

looking boar was started, but he too gave us the slip, and we had to be content with a half-grown sow that Lyon and I killed between us. After tiffin some of the camp followers ran races for empty bottles. These are prized by natives as receptacles for oil, of which they are great consumers, both externally and internally. Beer bottles are not despised, but soda-water bottles preferred, being stronger.

A strip of jungle running out from the main cover was next chosen for beating. In went the line of elephants, howdah and pad, with beaters on foot, and after a deal of noise and thrashing the jungle, a boar with a good pair of tusks appeared at the edge of the thicket, but being headed by some cultivators, broke back. The elephants were sent round, and again drove the boar into view, but he again refused to face the open. Once more the line went back and beat through the reeds, and once more Piggy was forced to show himself; but he obstinately stuck to his stronghold, and for the third time bolted back into cover. This last time he came out almost within spearing distance of me, and so close to the men on foot that one of them hit him over the back with his stick. It was now getting late, and we returned to camp in disgust.

Next morning (February 9th) it was determined to try fresh ground in a different part of the *chur*, so starting off the horses by land we got into boats and coasted along the bank. Arriving at our point we were saluted by a view-holloa! from a small boat, and were delighted to welcome young M. (Corney Delaney) the jovial Irish Professor, who had come out from Dacca to see the fun. He was got up for the chase in a short white jacket, bright crimson *cummerbund* (sash), cord breeches, long shiny boots, and an enormous *solah topi* that shaded his beaming countenance like a gigantic mushroom. Buckland, Wiseman, and Place mounted their elephants, while Lyon, Corney and I proceeded to look for the horses, the intelligent syces having gone the wrong way. After a long tramp we found the missing steeds. To-day Lyon rode a Waler belonging to a native in Dacca, called the "Maniac" from his fondness for rearing, jibbing, turning round, and in short doing anything rather than go on, when the fit seized him. Lyon had had many a fight with him at Dacca, and had taken some of the devil out of him, but the evil spirit still possessed him at times. M. was on "Peter," a lean,

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hard-mouthed Kattewar horse with a stripe down his back like a donkey, belonging to a young fellow in the regiment, and I had "Kate."

Very little pig-sticking was done to-day, but the field had rather a lively time. We cantered off to the elephants, the beat commenced, and two small sows were turned out. Our luck hitherto had been so bad that we could not afford to be particular as to sex, so gave our horses the rein and let them go. "Kate" was pulling hard: the sows separated, and we nearly came to grief over one of them. "Kate" knocked the brute over with her forelegs, made a bad stumble but recovered herself, and somehow I got a spear. How it was I forget, but the blade broke short off and remained sticking in the sow. "Peter" managed to get rid of his rider, and "Maniac" reared so straight up on end that Lyon slid over his tail, alighting on his feet. I got his spear and rode after the sow, but she got away into cover, and so I lost my spear-head. "Peter" concluded to take a bath, and frisked off to the river, where he began disporting himself in the water. We thought he was drowned, and poor Place, to whom the horse had been lent, strained his eyes in an agony of apprehension from the howdah, gazing on the spot where the playful animal had last been seen. However, he was at last caught and brought back none the worse; the saddle being rather sodden, and minus one stirrup-leather. My turn came next: cantering unsuspiciously over some ploughed land we suddenly happened upon a patch of soft treacherous stuff in which "Kate" went a header, and I left a correct cast of my figure in the mud.

Having thus all come to grief in turn we felt quite happy, and resumed operations. "Peter's" saddle not being fit to ride in, Corney got on the Policeman's elephant, and away we all went, but nothing else was seen except a pig trotting off in the far distance. After tiffin we beat a piece of ground that had been tried the day before; turned out five and killed a smallish sow (this place seemed quite a rendezvous for the ladies): two squeakers were also captured, and carried to the tents. "Kate" and "Maniac" were both dead tired with their long day's work in the heavy reed-jungle. Of the two squeakers brought in, one having been mauled by the dogs was destroyed: the other we agreed to let go, so he was cast loose and scampered away. Two paria dogs had followed us to camp, and these brutes gave chase. The squeaker had to cross a

widish piece of open ground before reaching the jungle, and his little legs were no match for those of the lanky bloodthirsty curs that soon closed with poor Piggy and began touzling him. Seeing this, I ran to the resene and drove off the dogs, when the little beast, nothing daunted by his rough treatment, charged straight at me. *Tableau*: Man chevying the dog, and Squeaker chevying the man, with an utter want of discernment between friends and foes.

Next morning (10th February) the party separated; Buckland, the Planter and Policeman going off in their boats to another island, Chur Mukundia, between Dacca and Furreedpore, after buffalo, while the rest of us stayed for one more try at the *null* jungle. Our perseverance was rewarded by getting two little boars out of a patch of tangled stuff. The first was turned out on a fine piece of level turf and speared by the writer: the second, killed in more difficult ground, fell to Lyon's steel. Both gave fair runs, but the heads were not worth keeping. That evening we embarked, and next day reached Dacca. Shortly after the Collector returned from leave and resumed charge.

On the 4th March we rode out to Naraingunge and tried for pigs in the neighbouring jungle with the help of fireworks and *Boonwa* beaters, but without success. The *Boonwas* are a wiry and active race of men from Western Bengal, of dark, almost black complexion, and fond of sport, addicted to flesh-eating, and great drinkers. They worked in the indigo factories about Dacca, and were useful as beaters with the line of elephants after pig.

Several official changes were now in the air. Buckland was taking three months' leave, and Simson from Mymensingh was to officiate for him. Our Collector was to relieve Simson, and the question was, who would get Dacca? A man had been gazetted, but was thought unlikely to join. I had lately held temporary charge of the office during my chief's absence in Calcutta, but being junior in the service could scarcely expect a three months' acting appointment as District Officer. But hope whispered all sorts of agreeable possibilities.

On the 26th March General Welchman came to inspect the regiment, accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Captain Fergus G., my old acquaintance at Chittagong. No longer a Sub in a marching regiment, he had now donned the frogged coat, brass spurs, and sabre of the Staff,

but this accession of dignity did not make him forgetful of former friends. The advent of a Brigadier produced quite a flutter of excitement, and it was determined to do all honour to the event. Buckland, with whom the General was staying, gave a military dinner to the Colonel of the regiment and other sons of Mars. Private theatricals and a ball were projected, and the sporting residents talked of Sky Races.

A day or two after I dropped in at a rehearsal, and some one told me I was to "act for Nevile." Connecting this with the matter in hand, and distrusting my abilities as an actor, I was about to decline the honour, when it was explained to my obtuseness that I was gazetted to officiate as Magistrate and Collector of Dacca during Nevile's absence,—a three months' appointment, with pleasing prospect of deputation allowance. I shied my old hat up to the ceiling in my delight at this good news; and to crown all, Lyon from Moonsheegunge was in orders to act as Joint, the Subdivision being put in charge of a Native Deputy Magistrate, an arrangement agreeable to all parties.

That evening Guni Mya gave a Station ball, and on the 30th March the Sky Races came off in the afternoon. The programme comprised a Hurdle Race, Hack Race, egg-picking race, foot-race for natives, and so on. "Dick" was entered for the Hurdles, and "Kate," who had just changed hands and become my property, for the Hacks. There were three entries for the former, the other riders being Lyon on "Crazy Jane," and the Collector on "Tommy," a pretty little Waler. It happened that "Jane" was in a temper (no uncommon event with the old lady), and both she and "Tommy" refused the first hurdle. This gave "Dick" a good start, and he managed to get in first, much to my satisfaction. The Hack Race was won by Lyon with "Maniac." Three of us started and raced past the Stand, "Kate" being about half a nose ahead; when it turned out to be no race after all, the two other riders not having started. In the second round "Kate" was nowhere.

On Monday (April 1st) new colours were presented to the regiment by General Welchman. The ceremony of trooping the colours took place on the Parade Ground at the Mill Barracks, and was well attended by the residents, with a good many ladies. That evening was guest-night at the Mess, followed by a dance. Next day the festivities wound up with private theatricals and a ball at the Judge's.

The 3rd April was noteworthy as the day on which hockey on horse-back was introduced in Dacca. The half-yearly examination was approaching, and amongst the examinees were two Assistants in the Police from Sylhet and Cachar, districts which being near Munipore (where “Kang Gai” is the national game) have long been noted for good hockey. These young fellows started the game, and one of them brought his servant, a Munipoori boy, who played beautifully. Little “Xit” was as lively as ever, and had evidently not forgotten Barrackpore. One evening we were rolled over by the enemy, and as he picked himself up and stood on his short legs again he gave a neigh of defiance. It did not take much to upset so tiny a tat, but a good deal to daunt his spirit.

On the 5th I took charge from the Collector, who left for Mymensingh; and Buckland, on being relieved by Simson from the same District, went to the Hills. Simson was known all over Bengal as a keen sportsman with lance, gun or rifle. Being a bachelor, his advent was especially welcomed by the younger men, among whom he became immensely popular from the zest with which he entered into their pursuits. He imported two ponies from Sylhet, and was soon looked upon as a powerful ally or formidable opponent on the hockey-field. He kept his own elephants, and had a stud of first-class horses. Officially, he was a pleasant superior, keeping his subordinates up to the mark without worrying them; in his private capacity hospitable and kindly. Few men of his time have not known or heard of “Black Simmy”;¹ fewer still could have known without liking him.

Another shooting party beat the northern jungles on the 12th April, the bag comprising three partridge, one small deer, two black rabbits, and a hare. The black rabbit (*Lepus hispidus*) is peculiar to this neighbourhood: it is not exactly black, but rather a dark mouse-colour, has *short* ears, long hind-legs like a hare, and runs off in a straight line like that animal, not dodging about from cover to cover like a rabbit. The fur is very harsh (hence the epithet *hispidus*), but easily pulled off. It appears to be the connecting link between hares and rabbits.

At the half-yearly examination of junior officers (15th April) I

¹ So called to distinguish him from a cousin and namesake in the service, who had a fair complexion.

attended for the first time as an examiner, and liked it better than being an examinee. During the week there was great hockey; and an old four-oared gig belonging to the station was got out and inspected, but found to leak so badly that she had to be laid up for repairs.

Hockey, now a regular event, had hitherto been played on the cricket-field; but this was found to be too small, and the trampling of the ponies' feet would spoil it for cricket in the cold weather; so it became necessary to choose a new ground, and on the 1st May a fine piece of turf 100 yards by 200 was picked out, near the cricket-field and conveniently adjoining the Race Course road, where people resorted of an evening. The introduction of polo was the more opportune, as the racket-court was just now under reconstruction. The old court was a huge barn-like structure, with no back-wall, and so capacious that people sat out at the back while play went on in the front part of the enclosure. It was decided to pull down the side-walls, rebuild them nearer together, and add a back-wall with a two-storeyed building to be used as a club and billiard-room, the verandah upstairs serving as a gallery to the court. Money for these improvements was raised by issuing shares, which were subscribed for by the residents.

The boat-club too, an old Dacca institution, was revived about this time. The ancient four-oar mentioned above being hardly fit for service, it was proposed to import a new ship, and negotiations were entered into for the purchase from the Calcutta Rowing Club of a China-built gig.

Lieut. Counsellor of the regiment was a great fisherman, and used to carry about assafetida in his pockets for bait, a habit which announced his presence very unmistakably. One afternoon in May I went with him to fish in a tank near the Lál Bágh. He had no great sport, but after a hard run found to his disgust that he had hooked a small mud-turtle! Tank-fish in Bengal run to a great size, especially the *rohoo*, *mīrga*, and *cutla*, of the carp species, which if well cooked are not bad eating, though rather coarse.

Returning home I found a visitor, Bradford of the Police, on his way from Purulia (Manbhoom District) to Comillah, with a letter of introduction from my old Burrisaul acquaintance Westcott, then stationed at Purulia. Bradford, a young fellow lately out from home, had just had

a severe accident while shooting near Purulia with Westcott and another, which happened in this way. W. was very short-sighted, and once at Burrisaul had peppered and nearly blinded his Collector, with whom he was out after snipe. On the present occasion two bears were started, and B., who was wearing a dark jacket, in his excitement ran after them. They disappeared in a ravine, into which B. followed and lost them, as they ran down the gully while B. crossed it and got up on the other side. Seeing a dark object Westcott fired, and the first shot being a miss, let drive with the second barrel, which unluckily for Bradford was so well aimed that the bullet passed through his right shoulder, just missing the joint on one side and a large artery on the other: had this been cut, the probability is that he would have bled to death before help could have reached him. As it was, the 12-bore rifle bullet made a great hole in his shoulder, and the collar-bone was broken or chipped; but he made a wonderful recovery, and when in Dacca a month or two after the accident was able to use his arm, though the shoulder was still rather weak.

Next day Simson returned from a tour in Cachar, and in the evening a hockey match was got up—Blue v. White—in honour of his arrival, the Blues beating by two goals. On Saturday, the 18th, a return match was played, when the Whites were victorious by the same number. These were the precursors of many well-fought contests, always played in these colours. The field mustered strong, and included the European jockeys from the local racing stables.

On the 19th May I left Dacca in the evening on board a budgerow, for a tour of inspection. My first point was Manikgunge, a Subdivision in charge of Moulvie Tujummul Ali, the Mahomedan Deputy Magistrate whom in 1864 I had relieved at Brahmanbaria. From Manikgunge I went north, and then round to the south and south-east. Thursday the 23rd May brought me to Toonghee on the River Toorág, a place on the Mymensingh Road, some fourteen miles north of Dacca. Here is an old Mahomedan bridge of three spans, which crosses the river at a considerable height. During the Mutiny the centre arch was blown up by Mr. Carnac the Magistrate, but it had been repaired with timber, and was then in full use. The old bridge with its pointed arches and turrets flanking the approaches on either side, high in the middle after the native fashion, made a picturesque object from the river below. I

had arranged to get to Toonghee on the Queen's Birthday, and join a pig-sticking party from Dacca. At the *ghât* was little "Xit" with his syce: cantering up the road I soon sighted the tents, and found our sporting Commissioner, Lyon, Counsellor of the regiment, and MacBeth the Banker at dinner.

Next morning (24th) all were up early; Counsellor and MacBeth mounted one of the elephants, Simson, Lyon, and I being on horseback. After some beating about we came to a promising bit of jungle, like an island in the plain. Two pigs were turned out of this, and at the tally-ho! off we went. "Dick" soon overhauled one of them in the paddy-field, and gave me first spear, Lyon got the second, and then Simson, who had been a long way off when the pig broke, came up and gave him a "settler"—blade and shaft must have penetrated a foot or more. The boar showed little or no fight, but got into a patch of dense cover, where horses could do nothing; so the elephants were sent for, but before they came up the pig was dead. By the rule of "first blood," the head was awarded to me, though Simson had done the killing: the tushes were good. Beating recommenced, and soon after a leopard was started. We on horseback could see nothing; but those in the howdah were better placed, and after some dodging the brute was viewed and rolled over with a straight shot by the Banker. It was small, but prettily marked. After this, to breakfast with hunters' appetites, sharpened by a preliminary and most grateful sousing from the bheestie's *mussuck* (water-skin). In the evening we were out again: two little pigs were roused, but nothing was bagged: Simson came to most beautiful grief in a pool of water.

Saturday morning (25th) was pleasantly cool and breezy for the time of year, May being one of the hot months. The first cover beaten was that in which the leopard had been shot the day before: three sows and a lot of squeakers were turned out, but this time the gentler sex was respected, and all were let go. Crossing a *khâl* we got into jungle which held partridge and green pigeons, also two does, one of which fell to MacBeth. As regards swine, the bag that day was *nil*: we had indeed a smart spin after a good boar, but lost him in heavy jungle. This was the wind-up of the party: in the evening I re-embarked for Moonsheegunge, and the others returned to Dacca.

Tuesday the 28th May dawned hazy, with a lowering sky. For two days we had been working against a strong head-wind, and now the weather looked most unpromising. It was moderate at first however, so we unmoored and went towing along, intending to get opposite Moonsheegunge and then sail across the river, at this point rather wide. The wind getting up again made progress difficult. At one place two big trees had fallen into the water, completely blocking the tow-path. Being at this early hour in the easy attire of night-shirt and *pyjamas* I jumped into the water, got hold of the *goon* (tow-rope), and between us we passed it round the obstacle. It now blew harder : we had to put our shoulders to the *goon* and pull our best. By this time there was quite a sea on, which swamped the cook-boat. The rudder of the budgerow got wrong ; it was difficult to keep her off the bank, so she was moored head to sea to ride more easily ; all hands then took to the water, slewed the cook-boat round with her stern to the waves, and got the water out of her. Having repaired damages we made sail for Moonsheegunge, to which place we were now opposite, but the wind was so strong that it nearly drove the budgerow ashore, while the cook-boat capsized altogether. All the fowls but one found a watery grave, while pots, pans, and other kitchen utensils were scattered to the wild waves. It was clear we could get no further that day, so ordering the boat to be again moored I went to breakfast. The servants dragged the cook-boat ashore, and at last got her empty : we then dropped down to a friendly creek and anchored in still water.

During the night the weather moderated, and next morning we were at Moonsheegunge, where I inspected the office, and having taken leave of the Native Deputy Magistrate, who had succeeded the Lyons in my well-remembered quarters, re-embarked. With a tearing wind, now in our favour, we flew back across the Delassery, ran up the Lukhya past the Greggs' house, and away into unknown regions. The scarped banks of the Lukhya are high and undulating, their rich red colour contrasting vividly with the green turf and jungle on top. This river is called "Sital (cool) Lukhya" by the natives, who consider its water excellent. It runs through comparatively high country, the prevailing soil of which is red *kunkur*—a kind of ferruginous limestone predominating in the northern division of the District, totally different from the alluvial formations of the south. This red *kunkur* is an offshoot from the Garrow Hills ; it runs

in a south-westerly direction through the Mymensingh District, and forms the peculiar hard uneven country covered by the Bhowal jungles north of Dacca. It is found in the suburbs to the north-west of Dacca, and crops up in different parts of the town itself. It reappears at Naraingunge, which is built on it, and a bed of it is met with at the ancient city of Sonergaon not far to the eastward. In the time of the Mahomedans iron was extracted from this ore; and in places heaps of a black nodular substance are found, evidently refuse of the smelting furnace. This "slag" makes good road-metal, the only objections to it being its excessive hardness, and the fine dust that comes by much traffic.

We were now in the jurisdiction of Police Thanah Kapasia. "*Kapás*" is the native word for cotton; and this tract, now very jungly, at one time was doubtless noted for the crop from which it derives its name. In former days cotton was extensively grown in the Dacca District, but its cultivation has been much reduced since the fine Dacca muslins have been almost driven out of the market by the cheaper goods of Manchester and other manufacturing centres. From the English mill-owners' point of view there may be little to regret in the victory of the machine-made article over the airy fabrics of the Indian hand-loom; but lovers of art may be pardoned for deploring the practical annihilation of the trade in Dacca muslins, once so famed for their beauty and wondrous fineness. Those of the most delicate texture were known by the names of *áb-rauán* or "running water," *shab-nám* or "evening dew," from the fact of their being, when wet, almost undistinguishable from either. It is said that in the time of Jehangir a piece of *áb-rauán* muslin could be manufactured 10 cubits by 2, weighing only five *siccas* or 900 grains, the price of which was 400 rupees. The finest that can be made in the present day, of the above dimensions, weighs about nine *siccas* or 1,600 grains, and is sold at 100 rupees. These finer kinds are not now made, except to order.

On the 1st of June I got to a place called Burmee, where "Dick" with his syce awaited me, as there was a bridge to look at in the neighbourhood. Burmee is on the Mymensingh Road, a good way north of Dacca: the country is high and undulating, and decidedly pretty, the surroundings in places resembling an English country lane. This was

my furthest point north : we retraced our course down stream, and on the 5th June reached Dacca.

The rains were now close at hand ; but before the country became unfit for riding, there was to be one more outing, which came about in a very casual manner. As the old Diary puts it, on Saturday the 8th June a course of the Oriental Sporting Magazine brought on a bad attack of jungle-fever, which being communicated to Lyon, induced a desire to go pig-sticking. We first routed out Place, who was studying Police Station reports, the arrangement of constables' beats, and other kindred matters. The project commending itself to him, Lyon and I jumped on our horses and started to beat up for recruits. The regiment furnished two—Major Lloyd, and Counsellor the fisherman. Our Commissioner was easily persuaded to join, and the party was thus complete. Toonghee was again chosen as the hunting ground, the country thereabouts being high and more rideable than the low-lying tracts further south by the big rivers, already getting spongy from heavy showers. Servants with camp equipage were sent off by boat, and Guni Mya's *jemadár* (headman) was ordered to despatch half-a-dozen elephants. A start was made for Toonghee the following afternoon in one of Guni Mya's carriages—Simson and Lyon inside, and I on the box. Place took Counsellor in his buggy, and Major Lloyd followed in his own trap. At Taltolee on the Mymensingh Road, a little way north of Dacca, our steeds awaited us, and the carriage was exchanged for the pigskin. We reached the tents without mishap, but the gallant Major did not turn up till about midnight. His horse "Æneas" broke down, and he had to walk most of the way. The unlucky beast actually died and became food for the vultures before we returned to Dacca.

The morning of June 10 was bright and fine : starting early, we beat several likely-looking patches ; had one spurt after a half-grown pig, but got nothing : hogs were afoot, but would not break ; and we returned to camp rather disgusted. The heat of the day, which in June is no joke, was spent under canvas, and we did not go out again till evening. The Major had been one of the riders in the morning, but now mounted an elephant, as nothing much was expected. The field was thus reduced to Simson, Lyon and myself, Place and Counsellor being also in the howdah. The Commissioner was on a country-bred, Lyon rode a

chestnut Waler lent him by Simson, and my mount was little "Dick." Beating commenced in the patch of jungle from which on the last occasion two pigs and a leopard had been turned out, and which from its game-holding qualities was afterwards named by Lyon "Neverblank." Nor was it now disappointing. From the commotion among the beating elephants, and excited gestures of those in the howdahs, it soon appeared that some animal had been roused. Presently we were granted a sight of his proportions—a fine boar came leisurely to the edge of the cover, but not liking the look of things in the open, again retired. The elephants were now urged forward, and made to close up as they approached the end of the jungle, while several shots were fired into the thicket. For some time the hog obstinately refused to break, till at last, when nearly under the elephants' feet, he came out with a rush. Simson and Lyon were at him first; but he dodged them and made at me, perhaps as a less formidable antagonist. As he shot past, I managed to give him a prod in the back: the bamboo being weak, the spear-head broke off and stuck, but he afterwards shook it out and the head was lost. I went back for a fresh spear, while Simson and Lyon pursued the monster. The latter gave him a good spear, and was obliged to leave it in him. Returning, I saw the boar in this condition, whirling round and round on the high bank of a tank, and could not think what he was doing till I saw him shake the spear out, when he resumed the defensive. The offensive would be almost more correct, for there was very little running away in his tactics. Having clearly elected to fight it out, the boar stood resolutely at bay, and charged any one who came near enough. Twice he went at Lyon so straight, that it seemed as if the horse's legs must be knocked from under him. In one of his charges he *got home* and gave Lyon's horse a terrible gash in the stifle, but the plucky animal never flinched, and no one knew he was wounded till Place drew attention to it from his howdah. The pig was now in an awkward corner where it was difficult to get at him, so the elephants were brought up to drive him into more practicable ground. This however was not easy. With a good eye for position, the boar stood, his rear protected by a little bank and patch of jungle, champing his tusks, his eyes gleaming wickedly, but making no other sign till one of the elephants (most unwillingly) came close, when with a sudden spring



1696.
Pict. Juts
ELEPHANT.

and twist of his head he cut her across the trunk with a savage “WHOOF!” sending her back double-quick. Presently another elephant was made to step over the pig, now rather weak from loss of blood, but just as she was lifting her hind-leg over him he again half sprang up and gave her a cut in the foot that made the blood flow at once. The hog had now got to the other side of the bank, and though still in a corner was so placed that we could manage, by riding past with a sweep, to get at him as he lay. “Dick” went up very well, but in course of time I broke my second spear also. At last Lyon became impatient, and got off to finish him on foot, a risky thing to do, as Simson had once found.¹ Our pig however was very nearly done for, and finally fell over, and with a last kick and one squeak (the first he had deigned to utter) his unconquered spirit took flight. He was a gallant brute and died game, his back to the jungle and his face to the foe: from first to last he cannot have run more than a few hundred yards. The assailants’ casualties were two elephants cut, one horse badly hurt, and many spears broken. The hog was mine, by the most tremendous piece of luck, and his tusches were lovely. They were sent home with those of the other Toonghee pig (p. 142) and mounted for wine-labels. In the scrimmage “Dick” had got an unlucky prick in the heel from my spear, probably in twisting and turning about as we rode at the pig in succession, and was laid up for some days.

Next day (June 11th) we beat a heavy piece of jungle on a nullah, known by the name of “*Jín*,” but got nothing; and in the afternoon returned to Dacca.

On the 15th there was a special meeting of the Municipal Committee to pass the yearly Budget;—the members, European and native, assembled in force. As officiating Magistrate of the District I had to take the chair, but felt rather small among so many who were my seniors. Later experience accustomed me to this sort of thing: the worst of such meetings was the time wasted in talking, which it is sometimes difficult to keep within bounds.

The following day (Sunday) the Doctor and I drove to Naraingunge to make enquiries about a fever that had been hanging about the place for some time. Gregg (the “Long ‘Un”), who was the leading European

¹ See Appendix D. Simson’s adventure with the boar.

resident, went with us to the village and assisted the Doctor in his enquiries. Considering the insanitary state of an average native village in Eastern Bengal, the huts surrounded by malarious jungle and stagnant pools, in an atmosphere polluted by neglect of the commonest rules of decency, the wonder is not so much that outbreaks of fever occur, but that they are not more frequent. Poor Gregg himself was in bad health, terribly thin and gaunt with a hacking cough, but in his case consumption, not fever, was the matter.

On the way back we looked in at an indigo factory belonging to Wiseman, the Doctor's uncle, at a place called Phatulla, and saw the Boonwas (see p. 137) at work making indigo. Stripped almost naked, they stood knee-deep in the huge vats, half-filled with water and the indigo-plant, which they were beating with a kind of paddle to extract the colouring matter. The liquid was dark green, and the foam from the splashing and mixing was blue. The men were covered with the dye, and looked like a gang of blue demons.

On the 18th June a Bachelors' Ball was given in honour of the late pig-sticking meet at Toonghee. The regiment kindly lent their mess-house for the dance, and the sepoy's did yeoman's service in scrubbing and waxing the boarded floor, which was got to an ideal pitch of perfection. The large mess-room was tastefully decorated and brilliantly lighted; the band played well, and military uniforms and ladies' gay dresses gave colour to the scene. Dancing was kept up into the small hours, and the commissariat arrangements were good. In short, the "Pig Ball" at Dacca was voted a success, and appropriately closed the hunting season: a day or two after there was a heavy downpour and the rains began steadily, putting a stop for the time to field sports and other pursuits requiring clear skies and dry ground for their full enjoyment.

For aquatics however the rainy season was not inappropriate, and at Dacca the river Booreegunga enabled us to enjoy fresh air and exercise in a pleasant way. A boat purchased from the Calcutta Rowing Club arrived by steamer about this time—a four-oared gig, clinker-built, with half outriggers—the very model of an English racing "tub," from which no doubt her Chinese builders had copied her. These men are first-rate carpenters, and clever at imitating European designs. She was

christened the *Anonyma*, and a crew soon got together, the most regular oarsmen being Corney Delaney, the Banker, Lyon and myself, with Bellew, another of the College Professors, as coxswain. The Judge Abernethy was an efficient waterman, and often took an oar; but his wife falling ill, he went with her to Nynce Tal for a change, so we lost him for a time.

Dacca lies near the steamer-route between Calcutta or Goalundo (river-terminus of the Eastern Bengal Railway) and the tea-districts of Assam; and in the rains, when the rivers are full, these vessels are not infrequent visitors. In the dry months they do not as a rule come nearer than Naraingunge. On the 1st of July a steamer and flat¹ arrived with coolies for tea-gardens in Cachar. The transport of labourers to the tea-districts is under Government control, and contractors are bound by rules as to food, accommodation, sanitary arrangements, &c. Among other conditions, coolies are to be inspected by the local officers at any station on the way; so when the vessels were reported, the Doctor and I went down to see them. The men squatted in rows on the deck, each with his metal plate and water-vessel in front of him—everything neat and clean. A doctor was in charge, and the coolies seemed well cared for and contented. They were from Western Bengal, whence labourers for tea-gardens are mostly recruited.

Buckland returned from leave on the 8th July; next day a farewell dinner was given to Simson, who left Dacca on the 10th. Before going away, Buckland had desired his Collectors to compile “historical, statistical and descriptive reports” of their several charges.² Nevile going to Mymensingh, the preparation of the Dacca Report devolved on me. The collection of statistics was rather troublesome, but there was in the office library a *History of Dacca* by Dr. Taylor, a former resident, which helped a good deal, though some of it was out of date.

¹ Cargo and houseboat combined. These vessels, great flat-bottomed iron barges of light draught and large carrying capacity, are used for transporting merchandise on the big rivers of Bengal. They are usually lashed alongside steamers, one or even two on each side. Secured in this way they look like floating houses, the steamer’s chimneys sticking up in the middle.

² The Dacca Division then comprised six Districts:—Dacca, Mymensingh, Backergunge, Furreedpore, Sylhet, and Cachar. The last two were transferred to Assam, erected into a separate Province under a Chief Commissioner, in 1874.

The clerks worked with a will, and information on various subjects was kindly furnished by several residents, official and non-official. The Report had to be taken up in the intervals of other business, but was finished and submitted to the Commissioner on the 17th July. In sending the reports up to Government, Buckland was good enough to speak favourably of the Collectors' work, for which one of them at least had afterwards cause to be grateful.

On the 26th July Mr. Grey the Lient.-Governor¹ arrived at Dacca on a tour of inspection, in his yacht the *Rhotás*. This vessel is not much like the pleasure-boats that flit gracefully about in British waters, being nothing but a very superior two-storeyed flat or houseboat. On the lower deck are the best state and sleeping rooms: above, a fine promenade deck, dining saloon, and cabins for the staff and guests. The fittings are handsome, and there is ample accommodation for a large party, such as usually accompanies the Governor. The flat is towed by a Government steamer, and is a luxurious conveyance. These vessels anchored off the *Sudder Ghát*, and a notice was sent round that the Lient.-Governor would "receive" at 11 o'clock, at which hour a barge carrying the blue ensign was in waiting to take visitors on board. Mr. Grey was accompanied by his wife and son, an aide-de-camp and Private Secretary,—also two members of the Bengal Secretariat and the Inspector-General of Jails. Dr. Paynter was in medical charge.

In the afternoon the visitors landed at the *Ghát*, where a guard of honour from the regiment was drawn up to receive them. Carriages were ready, and Mr. Grey drove up to inspect the Jail and Lunatic Asylum. After a dinner-party on board the *Rhotás*, a ball was given by Guni Mya in honour of the Lient.-Governor, with a display of fireworks. Next day the College and schools were visited, and in the evening there was a hockey-match. On Sunday the attendance at church was good, and our chaplain preached two excellent sermons. At dinner that evening on board the yacht I had the honour of sitting next Mr. Grey, who was most agreeable, and talked of taking the Dacca Report with him to read on the way to Cachar—a remark that naturally pleased the writer.

Early on Tuesday morning, July 30th, the Lient.-Governor and

¹ Mr., afterwards Sir William, Grey succeeded Sir Cecil Beadon.

THE
HAR-
BOR
OF
HARTFORD



party left for Sylhet and Cachar, and next day I gave over charge of the District to Neville and resumed my duties as Joint Magistrate. On the 3rd August I had to superintend the hanging of a man convicted of murder. The execution took place inside the Jail, and there was no great crowd outside.

Our new four-oar the *Anonyma* had been out several times, but never for any distance. On Sunday the 18th August it was arranged to row to Naraingunge, twelve or fourteen miles. An early start was made, and at about 4 A.M. we left the *Sudder Ghát* and glided out on the dark and silent Booreegunga. Turning into the Duláy creek (the harbour of Dacca, crowded with *budgerows* and native boats) we shot the Suspension Bridge on the Naraingunge Road, and following the course of the creek entered the Baloo River and thence got into the Lukhya. There was a slight drizzle at first, and afterwards a shower or two, but the weather was otherwise fine. The crew was made up of Corney Delaney, bow; the Banker, two; Lyon three, and myself stroke. The Collector was to have steered, but disappointed us at the last moment, and the rudder-lines were taken by Robertson, the junior Policeman. The swing and timing were fairly good, and the only oarsman that showed want of condition was stroke. After breakfast at Gregg'nugger, as Gregg's hospitable bungalow was familiarly called, the crew found their way back to Dacca by instalments. I forget how the *Anonyma* regained her boat-house.

On the 19th August the Lieut.-Governor and party again arrived at Dacca on their return from Sylhet and Cachar, and after more gaiety ending with a ball at the Mess on the 22nd the *Rhotás* finally left Dacca early next morning.

The *Janma Ashtami* (literally, 8th birth), one of the numerous Hindoo holidays that commemorate the birth of the god Krishna, is known at Dacca as the Weavers' Festival, being solemnised with great pomp and ceremony by the members of that fraternity. On the 27th August was the grand procession, with elephants painted and gorgeously caparisoned, cars gaily decorated with colours and tinsel, mummers and masqueraders, the whole show resembling a pageant at Carnival time on the Continent. Our house being on one of the main streets, we had a party at tiffin, and our guests afterwards adjourned to the roof of the

house, whence a good view was obtained. The procession was said to have fallen off of late years, its glories diminishing with the failing fortunes of the once wealthy and powerful guild of Dacca weavers.

Monday the 9th September brought Simson back again. This must be explained. Buckland's trip to the Hills had done him little or no real good; and after his return to Dacca he became so ill that he was unable to receive the Lieut.-Governor, and the Judge had to do the honours in his place. He was now ordered to England, Simson being again appointed to officiate, and left on the 12th with Wiseman, the great indigo planter and zemindar, who it was said had not been home for thirty years.

A large house next the Church had for some months been shared as a chummary between Place the Policeman, his Assistant Robertson and myself, the Lyons occupying rooms on the first floor with a separate *ménage*. Standing on one of the main thoroughfares, close to the racket court, and on the way to the polo ground, cricket field, and race-course, it was much resorted to as a convenient house of call for breakfast or tiffin, a friendly smoke, or "peg." All this was very sociable and pleasant, but had a marked effect on the sum total of the monthly bills:—in short, it was too expensive to last, so the establishment broke up. Place and his Assistant migrated to the Lál Bágh; where they occupied a substantial native edifice, fitted with venetians and otherwise adapted for a European residence, which had the advantage of being close to the Police barracks; while the Lyons and I, who had arranged to chum together, on the 1st October moved into our new house, a good deal smaller than the one we had left.

The Doorga Pooja holidays now began, and one morning Lyon and I with Counsellor went snipe shooting on the Mymensingh Road north of Dacca. The heat was too much for Counsellor, who soon gave in; while Lyon and I after a hard tramp had only $2\frac{1}{2}$ couple to show, whereof Lyon slew $1\frac{1}{2}$ and I the other couple. This was my first experience in snipe-shooting, and very hard work it was, pounding through luke-warm mud and water almost knee-deep under a blazing afternoon sun.

During the holidays Dacca was rather empty, of bachelors at least. Simson with the Collector and Bellew had gone off shooting; the Banker and Corney were also away; and now the Lyons took their departure

for Joydebpore in the Bhowál jungles north of Dacca, the residence of Baboo Kali Narain Rai, a wealthy landowner who kept up a fine house, built and furnished in the Western style, for the benefit of his European friends who might wish for change of air and scenery. The Doctor asked me to stay with him during the Lyons' absence, and I gladly accepted his invitation.

Some time before this I had applied for three months' leave, but on the 8th October a note came from Dampier the Secretary (whose acquaintance I had made when he came to Dacca with the Lieut.-Governor), which changed my plans. He wrote that Bevan, officiating Collector of Noacolly, was going on leave for a month, during which he would suggest that I should act for him, and afterwards go as Joint-Magistrate to Chittagong. Even temporary promotion is not to be lightly declined, so I willingly acquiesced in the proposed arrangement, and cancelled my application for leave.

During my stay with the Doctor, our house was left in charge of the servants. Indian servants as a rule are trustworthy, but of course there are exceptions. Amongst my effects were two bullock-trunks exactly alike, the only difference being that one was No. 1 and the other No. 2. In one of these were some Rs. 200 belonging to the cricket and hockey clubs, of which I had charge. On the 13th October I was told that this money had been stolen; and going to the house found that the lock had been forced, the contents of the trunk scattered about, and the money taken. That a servant was implicated appeared certain from the knowledge shown in selecting the trunk that contained the money, nothing else being touched. The thief was never caught.

Next day the Lyons came in from Joydebpore, and I returned to our house, after a week pleasantly spent with our genial Doctor, who was a favourite with all, natives as well as Europeans. His popularity with the former was quite exceptional: it was said that he was even admitted to Guni Mya's zenana, and possessed great influence with the ladies, who had the highest respect for his opinions.

On the 18th October I got my orders for Noacolly, and Lyon received his as acting Joint of Dacca. The 27th brought a letter from Bevan saying that he wished to be relieved on the 30th November or 1st December; that he was going home on furlough in March and did not

expect to return to Noacolly, so that I might hold on as officiating Magistrate. This was good news, and I began to look for something better than a mere temporary step. But on the 29th came a telegram from the Secretary directing me to wait further orders; and eventually, to my disgust, I found myself done out of the expected promotion altogether, for Government, having got wind of Bevan's plans, decided on sending a more senior man to officiate.

The half-yearly examination of juniors began on the 28th October, and brought visitors from out-stations. On the night of Friday, the 1st November, there was heavy rain and wind, and by daylight on Saturday it was blowing a gale. Young Kilburn, a Deputy Magistrate from Furreedpore, who had come up for the examination and was staying with us, was roused from sleep by a servant who reported that the Sahib's *budgerow* was sinking under the bund, and the cook-boat was missing. This woke us all up: we got into some clothes and sallied forth to find Æolus master of the situation. The usually placid Booreegunga was up in arms: there was quite a sea on, waves now and then dashing right over the river wall: an unlucky *budgerow*, adrift in mid-stream, was driving helplessly up before the wind, and Guni Mya's little steamer the *Star of Dacca* was riding at her moorings with steam up and engines working "easy ahead," to lessen the strain on her cables. Kilburn's boat was in a bad way. She had been moored under the "Buckland Bund," and was grinding against the wall, making a lot of water. We first tried to drag her into a less exposed place, but failing in this slewed ourselves down by the hawser, and proceeded to rescue Kilburn's effects. The water under the bund being shallow, there was no difficulty in getting on board: the cabin was half full of water, and we had to feel about for the goods and chattels, which were all adrift. A wretched duck tied by the legs was released, and sent flying on to the roadway above: then followed tinned provisions, soda-water bottles, lamp-glass, gun and other "notions," which were fished up and passed on to those above. It was something like sea-bathing in dirty and rather tepid water, with a lot of charcoal from the kitchen store floating about. By noon the river had risen tremendously, and the water was nearly up to the cabin roof: the boat was a complete wreck. Other *budgerows* had come to grief in the same way, and the havoc among native craft at the bazaar ghâts was

great. Much damage was reported from Naraingunge, where country sloops were driven ashore and a number of boats laden with jute capsized. This was the tail end of the cyclone of 1867 : the storm was much worse in Calcutta ; and the centre appears to have passed over the Sunderbuns somewhere about Port Canning. Among casualties at sea was the loss of the *Thunder*, opium steamer, homeward bound from China, which was supposed to have been cast away with all hands. Some time afterwards there was a rumour that the wreck of a large steamer with two funnels answering the description of the *Thunder* had been discovered in the Sunderbuns, and the natives who spread the report added that close by was the wreck of another ship with a blue streak, of which they brought away a board bearing the name *Morayshire*. This corroborated their story, as a vessel of that name was known to have been lost at the same time as the *Thunder*. The Calcutta agents sent a steamer with a search-party, which however returned without finding the wrecks. It was then suggested that the report was false, having been started for his own purposes by an Afghan half-breed named Shepherd, who with a gang of followers infested the Sunderbuns for some time, committed river-dacoities, and made himself the terror of that region. It does not appear that the truth of the matter was ever ascertained, but the story did not look like an invention.

The cyclone was followed by a spell of glorious weather, raising hopes that the cool season had fairly set in. On the 8th November came a letter from Dampier explaining his telegram, and offering me the acting jointship of Chittagong or Tipperah : I accepted the former. Then followed a week of wretched weather (9th to 16th November), dull, raw, and hopeless, with drizzling rain, not uncommon after such a storm : the natives call it “the ghost of the cyclone.” On the 16th it finally cleared, and the lovely cold weather mornings began.

The foxhounds imported by Guni Mya from Mymensingh (see p. 129) were old acquaintances of our Commissioner, who had them out for the first time on the 21st November. The meet was on the Naraingunge Road, Simson being M.F.H. with a native “whip.” The field comprised Lyon, the Banker, Corney and one or two more. Nothing was killed, and my own recollections of that morning are chiefly connected with an unlucky accident to “Dick.” In rushing through a

little bamboo fence he got a nasty cut on the off fore-leg just above the knee and had to be left in Lyon's charge. This was annoying, as all my animals were just now wanted for the journey to Chittagong.

The Dacca chronicle draws to a close. The last social gathering at which I assisted was a picnic to the Kartiek Baruni Fair at Moonsheegunge, given by Simson and the Collector on board the *Star of Dacca* on the 23rd November. After the feast Gregg and I bade adieu to the party and went ashore at Phatulla, where the road touches the river, and drove to Naraingunge, my starting-point for Daoodkandy and Chittagong. My last day in the Dacca District was spent at Gregg's, where everything recalled many a pleasant hour under his hospitable roof, and neither of us felt very cheerful. Few words were needed when time was up: one parting toast: "Here's luck, wherever you are!"—a tight grip of the hand—and farewell for ever to Greggnugger. This was the last I saw of Ivie Gregg. Next year consumption claimed its victim, and he died at the age of 26. Peace to his memory! His name may not live in history, but is not forgotten by those who knew him, and who never knew a truer, kindlier, more unselfish fellow than the dear old "Long 'Un."

APPENDIX B

THE MUTINY AT DACCA

The mutinies began at Barrackpore in March, 1857, by the 34th N.I. Three officers were wounded. The 19th at Berhampore then showed signs of disaffection; they were ordered to Barrackpore, and both regiments were disbanded. In May news arrived of the outbreak at Meerut. At this time the sepoy's stationed at Dacca consisted of two companies of the 73rd N.I. In this month the Missionaries met with some opposition from the sepoy's whilst preaching in the bazaar. At the end of May or beginning of June, two of the companies of the 73rd arrived from Julpigoree as a relief for those that had been in Dacca for some time.

10th June.—The troops appear excited on account of the rumour that European troops are to be sent to Dacca.

12th June.—A panic spread among the Europeans in consequence of a report to the effect that the two companies of the 73rd which had left the station about the beginning of the month had met with some disbanded men from Barrackpore, and had mutinied; that they had returned to Dacca and had been joined by the men at the Lal Bágh; that they were looting the bazaar, and setting free the prisoners at the Jail. A number of Europeans assembled at the house of Mr. Jenkins the Magistrate;¹ others resolved to defend themselves at the Bank. Some of the ladies went on board boats on the river; arms were collected; the whole town was in a state of excitement; the bund was crowded with natives in a state of wonder and curiosity. Lieutenants McMahon and Rhynd, the officers in command of the troops, started for the Lal Bágh, where the sepoy's were located. On their return they reported that their men were all quiet and in their quarters; that the alarm was groundless. On the evening drive, the natives who were collected in knots along the road seemed surprised to see us, after the report that we had all fled and left them to their fate.

13th.—Everything quiet again, and we are going on with our work as usual.

Between the 19th and 23rd June, the Government sent up a hundred men of the Indian Navy under Lieutenant Lewis, for the protection of the town. They were located in the house on the opposite side of the road to the Baptist Chapel.

¹ On the day of the first panic, Jenkins was Magistrate, and Carnac Collector. Subsequently Carnac was appointed Magistrate and Collector. At this time Davidson was Commissioner, Abercrombie the Judge, Pearson Additional Judge, and Bainbridge Assistant Magistrate.

28th.—Two deserters were caught in the neighbourhood by the Police, but were rescued by some of the sepoys. The two companies were paraded, but the *burkundazes* (constables) either could not point out the men who had assisted in the rescue, or they were afraid to do so. The sepoys complained that they could not go about the town without being interfered with by the Police.

5th July.—The Metcalfes¹ came in from Comillah in a fright; they had heard that the sepoys at Chittagong had mutinied, and that they were on their way to Dacca. The report was however without foundation.

Dacca has been comparatively quiet since the arrival of the sailors. Lieutenant Lewis has his tars out frequently in the morning, to practise with the guns in the space near the Raequet Court, and in front of the College. He wheels his men about in all directions; sometimes he storms the Collectorate,—first at one gate, then at the other, going through all the manœuvres for loading and firing. The sepoys on guard² are very angry; they say: “*Yih kya dar dekhla?*” (“What is all this threatening?”) They do not seem to have much affection for the sailors. To-day there was something of a panic among the sepoys. Dowell, who is in command of the station, sent up to the Lal Bāgh for the screws used in elevating the guns, and the men there supposed that there was some intention of disarming them.

30th July.—A meeting of Europeans and East Indian inhabitants capable of bearing arms was held at the College; nearly sixty people present. It was resolved to form two corps of volunteers, one of infantry and the other of cavalry; Major Smith to command the infantry, and Lieutenant Hitchins the cavalry.

1st, 2nd, and 3rd August, the three days of the *Buckree Eed*.³—The volunteers all on the alert; patrols out all night on each of the three days. Apprehension that the Mahomedans may cause some disturbance. The 2nd being Sunday, a party of the volunteers stationed at the College to protect the people who were at Church. Great alarm amongst the European and Armenian residents, especially among those with families. The terrible news from the North-West proves the necessity of being prepared for any sudden outbreak.

11th August.—Many of the Armenians are leaving for Calcutta. The Europeans are thinking of fortifying the Mills. The volunteers are on parade for several hours daily, and are making good progress in drill. File-firing to-morrow, and target-practice shortly. The natives scarcely understand the commotion among the *Salibs*, or the object of the *volunteer ka pultun* (regiment), who have been keeping up nightly patrols.

14th and 15th August.—The festival of the *Jummo Ostomee*.⁴ There was as usual a large crowd of people. The cavalry volunteers were mounted on elephants, and well

¹ Mr. Metcalfe was Judge or Collector of the Tippera District.

² Men of the Treasury guard at the Collectorate.

³ A Mahomedan festival, following the fast of Ramzan, which lasts for a month, during which no food is taken till after sundown. The *Id* closes the fast on the appearance of the new moon, and is celebrated as a period of pious rejoicing and relief from fasting. This is succeeded by the *Bakri Id*, so called from the animal sacrifices, chiefly of goats (*bakri*), that are offered at this festival.

⁴ A Hindoo festival, celebrating the eight incarnation of Krishna.

armed and ready for anything that might occur. The infantry were also armed, and at the College, but all passed off quietly. Letters from Julpigoree, the headquarters of the 73rd. The officers say they have no hope of being able to keep their men from following the example of the rest of the Bengal Army. They have sent away two of the ensigns to Darjeeling; but that if their men should rise, they have no expectation of being able to escape, as the country is completely inundated; and they have no *pucka* house in which they could take refuge to defend themselves.

It has been decided that if the men at Julpigoree do mutiny, the sepoy here shall be at once disarmed. There are about fifteen men at the Collectorate; and the plan will be to disarm these in the first instance, and afterwards to proceed to the Lal Bágh to disarm the men there, and to bring away the guns now in their charge.

22nd August.—The fortification of the Mills is going on; and it will not be long before the place will be ready. There are 200 men at work, digging a ditch from the nullah round the house to the river.

27th August.—The fortifications are progressing; and it is supposed that should there be occasion for it, we should be able to make a stand against five or six thousand men. The country around is however quiet, but there are many rumours of armed men having been seen at different places coming down the river in boats. We are informed by the Magistrate that we are to have two companies of Europeans at Dacca, and one troop of Horse Artillery, within a month.

30th August.—Yesterday, Sunday, was the great day of the Mohurram.¹ The cavalry volunteers were out all the night patrolling; they describe the town as unusually quiet. The people did not assemble in the same numbers as in former years. Only about fifty were present at the Hosseinee Dalán. It is believed that the Musulmans are completely cowed.

14th September.—Some alarm here in consequence of a report that the sepoy in Assam are in a state of great excitement, and that they had become very insolent. The Government has sent off a number of sailors in the *Horungatta* by way of the Sunderbuns; they are expected to arrive here to-morrow, and are intended for Assam.

The 73rd at Julpigoree still quiet. We have hopes that it will prove staunch. Should it not, we shall be involved here; but we shall be quite a match for the sepoy.

¹ The most important of all religious observances among the Musulmáns, commemorating the holy war waged against the infidels by Hassan and Hussen, and their untimely death. Under the old Nawabs of Dacca, the ceremonies of the Mohurram were performed with great solemnity at the Husseni Dalán, and the festival is still observed there, but on a reduced scale of grandeur. The place of worship called Husseni Dalán is situated in the heart of the city near the Jail, and is said to have been built by Mir Morád, Darogah of the Nawára Mehals, who had charge of the public buildings in the time of Sultan Muhammad Azim.

The Nawára Mehals were tracts of country the revenue of which was set apart for maintenance of the Fleet under the Mogul Government.

During the Mohurram outbreaks of fanatical violence, and affrays, especially between Hindoos and Mahomedans, are not uncommon.

and they would probably take to flight. They have been much more respectful towards us of late.

27th September.—Everything quiet. The apprehensions regarding the spread of the insurrection to Bengal are in some measure allayed.

4th October.—To-day has been fixed upon by the Bishop as a day of humiliation. Winchester away at Sylhet. The service was read by Abercrombie, and the sermon by Pearson. In Dacca we are all quiet. The Rajah of Assam was brought in a prisoner the day before yesterday.

12th October.—The cavalry volunteers gave a ball to the infantry. The gathering not so great as was expected; about ten ladies present. Of the infantry volunteers only about twenty attended in uniform. The party was, on the whole, a very pleasant one.

19th October.—Some of the sepoy here have been recently punished, but the matter has been kept quiet.

1st November.—Something like a panic occurred on Sunday last, caused by the removal of the sailors to the house near the Church recently occupied by the nuns. The sepoy got ammunition out of the magazine, and it was thought that an outbreak was imminent. It is reported that they have written to their brethren at Julpigoree, asking whether they should resist if an attempt were made to disarm them. We believe that the disarming could be effected with little danger to ourselves; but it is feared that the effect on the troops at Chittagong, Sylhet and Julpigoree might be disastrous. It is supposed that if we can preserve order in Dacca, the other places will remain quiet. The men are very civil, but with the example of their *bhai buns* (brethren) before us, we cannot put much trust in them.

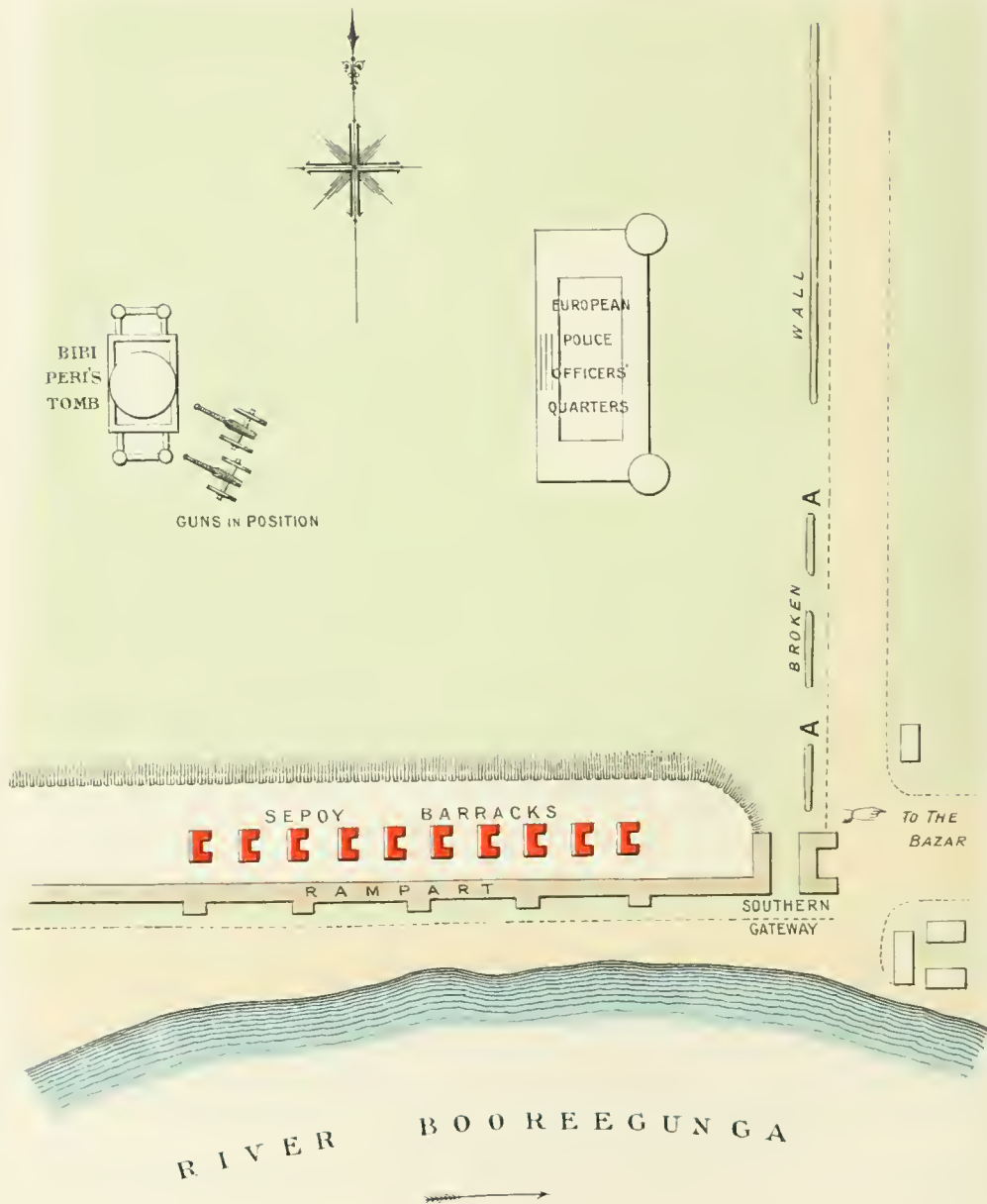
9th November.—The infantry volunteers gave a dinner to the station. It came off in the large hall of my house. It was one of the largest parties of gentlemen that has ever been in Dacca. About seventy were invited, and upwards of fifty sat down to dinner. People thought that my house would not be large enough for the occasion, but everything was very conveniently arranged.

17th November.—Everything continues quiet around us, and the news from the North-West is more cheering.

26th.—The storm that has been passing over India has just passed over Dacca, happily without any of the disastrous effects that have attended it in its course elsewhere. We are now rid of our 'staunch' and 'loyal' friends—the sepoy. Up to Saturday last we were going on just as usual. There was a party out at cricket in the afternoon, and the volunteers were at their usual exercise with ball-cartridge. In the evening we had our usual drive on the course. The hawk, however, brought bad news from Chittagong; and an express was received with intelligence that the remnant of the 34th, the regiment disbanded at Barrackpore at the beginning of the mutiny, had broken out; that they had looted the Treasury, taking with them about three lakhs of rupees (Rs. 300,000); and that they had also killed several Europeans. It is now believed that the Europeans escaped. At about 6 o'clock in the evening it was determined that the sepoy here, the detachment of the 73rd, should be disarmed: their number, including the artillery men under the command of Dowell, was 260. They had possession of two field pieces; and in their lines they held a remarkably strong position.

SKETCH PLAN OF LAL BAGH, DACCA.

A.A. INDICATE THE POINT
OF THE SAILORS' ATTACK.



It is reported that they threatened to resist any attempt at disarming them, and they affected to despise our sailors, who are generally of small stature. The sailors were about ninety in number, fit for duty. It was therefore necessary that they should use great precautions in dealing with a body of armed men nearly three times their number.

The volunteers were warned to be ready at 5 o'clock the following morning, Sunday, the 22nd, and they were enjoined to assemble quietly, so as to excite no suspicion. At the time appointed, there were assembled the Commissioner, the Judge, and some other civilians, and from twenty to thirty volunteers. It was still dark, and we waited a short time for the signal. The plan was, to begin by disarming the Treasury guard, to place the disarmed men in charge of the volunteers: the sailors would then proceed with their whole force to the Lal Bâgh; and it was hoped that the men there would have given up their arms without opposition. Everything appeared to go on well: the guards at the Treasury were disarmed before the signal was given for the volunteers to advance. There were about fifteen of the sepoys standing or sitting outside of their quarters; and the rest of them, making altogether about thirty-six, were supposed to be inside the building. They appeared to be very much dejected, and they reproached their officers for subjecting them to such disgrace, protesting that they would have given up their arms at once to their own officers had they only been asked to do so.

In the meantime the sailors, on reaching the Lal Bâgh, found the sepoys drawn out, prepared to make a resistance: they had evidently been apprised of our intention to disarm them. The sentry fired his musket and killed one of our men; his example was followed by the others, and a volley was fired on the sailors as they advanced through the broken wall near the southern gateway. The guns had been placed in position in front of Beebee Peri's tomb, so as to command the entrance, and they opened fire upon our men with grape. As soon as the sailors had got well into the place, they fired a volley. Lieutenant Lewis then led them up the ramparts to the left, charging the sepoys, and driving them before them at the point of the bayonet. The sepoys took shelter in their quarters, but they were driven on from building to building by the sailors. At this time Mr. Mayo,¹ a midshipman, at the head of eight men who were under his command, made a gallant charge from the ramparts down upon the sepoy guns; they were soon taken and spiked, and the sepoys began flying in every direction. There was a severe struggle at the end of the rampart: many of the sepoys were driven over the parapet. Mr. Bainbridge had also a fall over the parapet as he stepped back to avoid the thrust of one of the sepoys. The sailors obtained a complete victory: the sepoys fled and concealed themselves in the jungle, leaving about forty of their number killed. Many of those who escaped were severely wounded. Our loss was one killed on the field, four severely wounded, since dead, and nine more or less severely wounded. Dr. Green, who accompanied the sailors, was wounded in the thigh. He was kneeling down at the time attending to one of the sailors, who had also been wounded. He is getting on well, but complains of numbness in the lower part of the leg.

A number of the fugitive sepoys have been brought in. Four of them have been already hung, and several others are to undergo the same punishment. On Monday

¹ Afterwards made V.C. for his dashing behaviour on this occasion.

everything was quiet again, and we were going on with our work as if nothing had happened. But many of the natives left the city through fear.

29th November.—We have had great apprehensions during the week regarding the residents at Mymensingh and Sylhet. It has been ascertained that our fugitive sepoys were on their way towards those places. It is fortunate however that they are not all proceeding together. The largest party only took the Toke road towards Mymensingh: about twenty of their armed men were in front; then followed some of the disarmed men, and only one woman with her children: then the wounded, who appear to have been numerous, and lastly another body of about thirty armed men. As they approached Mymensingh, the Magistrate with a number of *burkundazes* (policemen) took the field to oppose their passing through the station. They declined the fight, and took the direction to Jumalpoore.

The Chittagong mutineers were on their way to Dacca, and it was supposed that their object was to join the men of the 73rd. It was then reported that they were about to cross the Tipperah Hills to join the men stationed at Sylhet. It is now currently reported that they are at a place on the other side of Comillah: that they have sent a message to the Rajah of Tipperah, that if he does not join them they will dethrone him. The European inhabitants of Comillah, and the respectable native inhabitants, have all got away.

30th November.—Three of Lal Bágh mutineers were hung this morning: these, with eight others that have already undergone the same punishment, make eleven in all. We consider that such examples are absolutely necessary in these times. They have produced an excellent effect upon the people, and the bad characters of the town thoroughly understand the lesson that has been read to them. I do not remember the time when the natives were so civil in their behaviour as they are now.

3rd December.—Two steamers and a flat arrived this morning with 300 of the 54th Queen's Regiment and 100 sailors on board. The soldiers start for the Tipperah District as soon as a sufficient stock of provisions can be collected. It is supposed that they will be in time to intercept the men from Chittagong before they can reach Sylhet. The sailors will proceed to Bulwah on their way to Rungpore. It is to be hoped they are not too late. The Sylhet dawk is stopped. It is supposed that the Chittagong mutineers are somewhere on the Sylhet road.

9th December.—The latest reports from Sylhet state that the Chittagong mutineers had not reached that station; that they were somewhere in the territories of the Rajah of Tipperah; and that they were afraid to venture upon the plains for fear of the *gora lóy* (white people). Their party in all consisted of about 500, including their women and children, and the prisoners they had set free from the gaol at Chittagong. They were in great want of provisions, and were stockading themselves, expecting an attack to be made upon them.

18th December.—No tidings for the last few days from Sylhet. The last news received was to the effect that the people there were prepared to give the mutineers a warm reception if they should venture upon attacking them. We hope to hear shortly from the troops which left us so lately. The Dacca mutineers are supposed to be somewhere in Bhootan.

14th January, 1858.—The station is now somewhat gay. The steamers with the

European troops have returned. The Chittagong mutineers had kept too close to the jungle on their way to Sylhet. The Sylhet Light Infantry came up with them on two occasions, and each time they have beaten them. The soldiers and sailors are strolling about the streets in great numbers. There is some uncertainty if they are to remain at Dacca. The general impression is that they are not required here, and that they might be usefully employed elsewhere.

24th January.—The European troops have left for Calcutta. Although everything is quiet on this side of the country, the sailors will probably remain for several months longer.

The principal topic now in India is the transfer of the Government to the Crown, and the probable changes that may take place in the different services, and in the general interests of the country.—*History of Dacca.*

APPENDIX C

A DAY AT SHIKARPORE

PROLOGUE.

O CHASTE Diana, in whose groves
The stately stag securely roves ;—
Where, deep in some sequestered hollow,
The grunting herd at midday wallow ;—
Where cruel tigers silent prowl,
And sneaking jackals nightly howl ;—
Where stalks the *Háthi*¹ in his pride,
And shakes the earth with mighty stride ;—
Thou goddess of the gleaming star,
Divine protectress of *Shikár*,—
Thee I invoke, nor let me ask in vain,—
Inspire my lay, assist my humble strain !

CANTO FIRST.

THE CAMP.

I.

White gleam the tents on Megna's shore
Beneath the palms of Shikarpore ;
And topes and hamlets, many a one,
Are glittering in the morning sun.

II.

Two *budgerows*,² moored side by side,
Float idly on the swelling tide :
On board there reigns a silence deep—
In fact, the crew are all asleep.

¹ Elephant.

² House-boats used on Indian rivers.

III.

Within the half closed cabin-door
 Resounds a most melodious snore,
 Which, issuing from some Sahib's nose,
 Proclaims the depth of his repose.

IV.

With trembling step the nigger creeps
 To where his master soundly sleeps,
 And whispers in the dreamer's ear :
 "*Khudárwand, abhi din ho gia !*"¹

V.

Straight at his head the bootjack flies,
 Loudly the Sahib d—ns his eyes !
 But soon the early cup of tea
 Restores his equanimity.

VI.

Now one by one the rest arise,
 And stretch their legs, and rub their eyes
 With many an awful yawn,—
 While from a clump of trees remote
 The Indian blackbird's² silvery note
 Hails the uprising morn.

VII.

Th' encampment now is all astir ;
 The word is "Saddle, boot and spur,
 And *chota haziri !*"³
 Now issues forth the dusky host
 Of *khitmutgars* with buttered toast,
 And fresh-laid eggs, both boiled and roast,
 And cups of rich Bohea.

¹ My lord, it is now day !

² The *Koel*, a handsome black bird with long tail, whose whistle is often heard before sunrise.

³ Early tea and toast. *Lit.* Little breakfast.

VIII.

Beneath the trees, a mighty band,
 The elephants sedately stand ;
 Their morning forage slowly munch,
 And juicy stems of plantain ¹ crunch.
 Their ponderous ears they idly flap,
 With bristly tails their sides they slap,
 And wink their little piggy eyes,
 And doubtless curse the pestering flies.

IX.

Oh 'tis a goodly sight, I ween,
 Beneath the branches' verdant sheen
 To view the noble steeds !
 Faultless in symmetry and shape—
 Australian, Cabuli, and Cape,
 And Persia's choicest breeds.

X.

See yonder chestnut on the plain
 With arching neck and silky mane
 That half conceals the drooping rein,
 And broad and sinewy chest.
 With head erect, and eye of fire,
 And iron limbs that never tire,
 He claims descent from many a sire
 Of Araby the Blest !

CANTO SECOND.

THE HUNTERS.

I.

But now 'tis time in turn to tell
 The name of every gallant swell
 Arrayed in hunting tog,
 Who's hither come from far and near,
 With horse and hound and glittering spear,
 To hunt the bristly hog.

¹ The succulent stem of the banana or plantain is a favourite food of elephants.

II.

Lord Lyon¹ first is on the list,
 His lance is in his manly fist,
 He wields it light with sinewy wrist,—
 A stout *shikári* he !
 Where'er from out the patch of green
 The grisly boar to break is seen,
 Oh there young Lyon will, I ween,
 The foremost rider be !

III.

His front severe, and grizzled hair,²
 His brawny neck exposed and bare,
 His meditative eyes
 Beneath his *topi* just revealed
 Denote the hunter in the field,
 In court, the *Hákím*³ wise.

IV.

With lightest touch upon the rein
 He gently curbs "Demented Jane,"⁴
 That steed so staunch and true,
 Who never yet was known to flinch
 The smallest fraction of an inch
 From thorns or stiff bamboo.

V.

The *chowkedárs*,⁵ a motley band,
 Around him all obsequious stand,
 And make the low *salám*.
 They hail him Lord of Moonsheegunge,
 Of Rajabari, Mulfatgunge,⁶
 And many a fertile farm.

¹ D. R. L., Esq., B.C.S., Asst. Magte. in charge of Moonsheegunge. Now C.S.I. and (late) Member of the Revenue Board, Calcutta.

² As quite a young man, L. had grey hair. When last seen by the writer, his hair, still abundant, was silvery white. ³ Judge or Magistrate.

⁴ "Crazy Jane," a powerful Waler, L.'s favourite pig-sticker.

⁵ Village watchmen. ⁶ Police Stations in the Subdivision of Moonsheegunge.

VI.

He passes on, and in his place
 Another horseman comes apace
 With golden hair and beardless face
 Careering o'er the plain: he
 No Saxon is, though ye may smile,—
 The jewel of the Emerald Isle,—
 A knowing and facetious file,
 Cornalius Delaney !¹

VII.

But newly from the “ould counthree,”
 No veteran *shikári* he,
 But this his first *début* ;—
 With jacket short, and sash of red,—
 A *solah topi* on his head,—
 A true Hibernian born and bred,—
 He's game to die or do !

VIII.

His right hand clasps the maiden steel,
 His toes the stirrups lightly feel,
 His heels the spurs adorn ;
 And if a pig gets well away
 With Corney after him, I'll lay
 A “chick,”² that pig will rue the day
 That ever he was born !

IX.

Stratford de Redclyffe³ next appears—
 His lance's point on high uprears,
 And curbs his fiery steed.

¹ C. A. M., Esq., of the Education Department, a Professor in the Dacca College. Dubbed by his intimates Corney Delaney.

² Four rupees.

³ G. Stratford, Esq., of the Bengal Police, lived at the Lál Bágh (“Red Garden”) where the Police were quartered.

With patent boots, and spurs of steel,
 (As yet undimmed by envious *bheel*¹)
 Completely armed from head to heel—
 St. Mary be his speed !

X.

And now each gallant Cavalier,
 Unto the tents approaching near,
 With courtly *politesse*
 Down to his saddle bending low
 Due homage does with reverent bow
 To Lady Lyonesse.

XI.

Flutters her kerchief in the breeze,—
 With pride her gallant lord she sees,—
 Yet speaks in anxious tone :
 “Dear Robert, pr’ythee, be not rash,
 Or you may chance your skull to smash,
 Or else your collar-bone !”

XII.

Lord Lyon waved a fond adieu
 As o’er the turf at speed he flew :
 The others followed on amain,
 And lightly pryckèd o’er the plain.

CANTO THIRD.

THE CHASE.

I.

It were a tedious tale to tell
 How every jungle, brake and dell
 They beat with anxious care :

¹ Stratford was a bit of a dandy, and the gloss of his riding boots was dazzling. On one occasion it is said that he and his horse went end on into a green marshy bog-hole or *bheel*, which took the shine off his get-up. Hence the allusion.

The *húthis* were in line arrayed,—
 The *Boonwas*¹ din infernal made,—
 Each man impatient shook his blade,
 But not a *soor*² was there !

II.

At length they found a thorny patch
 Says Lyon : “ Here a pig we’ll catch,
 For this a stunning place is.
 You fellows each must take a side,
 While I myself alone will bide :
 If breaks a boar, whate’er betide,
 Dig in your spurs, like madmen ride,
 And tally-ho like blazes ! ”

III.

Each horseman silent takes his place
 And crams his *topi* o’er his face,
 Preparing for the desperate race,
 His heart with purpose big.
 The elephants the beat resume,
 And burst the thicket’s tangled gloom,
 When sudden through the twilight loom
 The long-expected Pig !!!

IV.

Oh, then from earth to heaven uprose
 So fierce a yell, that you’d suppose
Jehannum’s³ fiends had broken loose
 With one infernal roar !
 The frightened sounder headlong dash
 Through bush and brake with many a crash :—
 In front of all, with furious smash,
 And bristling back, and eyes that flash,
 Breaks forth the mighty Boar !

¹ Or *Banwas*. Low caste men, mostly leather-dressers by trade ; also employed about Dacca in the manufacture of indigo. They hunt pigs on foot with spears and dogs, and make capital beaters.

² Pig.

³ The infernal regions (*Gehenna*).

V.

Delaney sees, and grips his spear,
 And from his lips, distinct and clear,
 Rings out the TALLY-Ho !
 The others follow on apace,
 And reckless join the headlong race,
 Each striving for the foremost place
 As after him they go.

VI.

In front appears a patch of green—
 A treacherous piece of ground, I ween,—
 But little cares old "Crazy Jean" ;
 In fact, I'm sure it would have been
 Impossible to stop her :
 So with a bound right in she goes,
 Above her girths the water rose,
 She reeled, and toppled on her nose,
 And Lyon came, you may suppose,
 A most tremendous cropper.

VII.

But, nothing daunted, up he gets,
 His disappointment straight forgets,¹
 Wrings out his reeking tops,
 And shouts to Corney : "In you go !
 Hold up your head, your hand keep low,
 That pig is doomed to be, I know,
 Converted into chops !"

VIII.

Delaney stayed no second word,
 But at the pig he deftly spurred,
 Like shaft from bended bow.
 The brute, hard pressed, turned sharply round,
 And with a sudden vicious bound
 Just caught him by the toe.

¹ No petty jealousy about L., who rode straight, and recked little of the chapter of accidents. Moreover as a good whist player he knew that so long as the trick was gained, it mattered little which partner held the winning card.

IX.

The horse's haunches next attacked,
 But Corney swift his courser backed,
 For riled indeed was he !
 With truest aim, and sudden dash,
 Like lubricated lightning flash,
 Right through and through his spear did smash,—
 A worthy sight to see !

X.

The monster plunged upon his side,
 And spouted forth the gory tide,
 Which dyed the greensward red.
 One long-drawn gasp,—a bubbling groan—
 A quiver,—then a shuddering moan—
 The mighty Boar was dead !

XI.

With eager haste the rest appeared,
 And loudly young Delaney cheered,
 Who thus a pig alone had speared
 Right gallantly, I trow :
 When Lyon sudden shouted : “ Well,
 This *is* a most almighty sell !
 The Dacca folks what *shall* we tell ?—
 You’ve killed a wretched Sow !!! ”

XII

The first emotion overpast,
 With mouth agape, they stood aghast,
 And round the carcase pressed.
 Alas, too true, no tushes keen
 From out the jaw protruding seen
 Denote the boar,—but well I ween
 She lay a sow confessed !

XIII.

Says Lyon : " Never mind, my boys,—
 We'll drown the dumps in beery joys,—
 She was no craven flincher ;
 And if you measure true and fair
 From back to heel she is, I'll swear,
 At least a forty-incher ! " ¹

CANTO FOURTH.

CONCLUSION.

I.

I've not sufficient space, I fear,
 To tell how every cavalier,
 With eager visage drawing near,
 Imbided the effervescing beer
 Without so much as blinking ;
 Nor how the draughts of potent " bub " ¹
 Were followed by substantial grub,
 Which disappeared like winking.

II.

My Muse a nobler task employs ;
 On base Epicurean joys
 Let other pens dilate :
 Besides, there really isn't time
 In this severe and lofty rhyme
 Such trifles to narrate.

III.

Nor can I linger here to tell
 What subsequent events befel ;—
 How they through thicket, copse and dell
 The bristly monster sought ;

¹ Pigs are measured from the false hoof of the foreleg to the middle of the back. Forty inches would be very large indeed.

In *Letters on Sport in Eastern Bengal*, Mr. F. B. Simson, a famous hog-hunter, says that the proper way to measure a hog is to stick two spears in the ground,—one touching the withers, the other at the heel, and measure the space between. This would give smaller results than the other plan.

Nor how at e'en beside the tent,
 With arduous exertion spent,
 And many a garment torn and rent,
 Havannah's¹ fumes they upward sent,
 And fields of eld re-fought.

IV.

My tale is told : yet, ere we part,
 I must from out my inmost heart
 My sentiments declare.
 These youths, who went to Shikarpore,
 And stayed there half a week or more,
 And hunted all the country o'er,
 Yet never got a single Boar,—

WHAT JOLLY MUFFS THEY WERE!!!!!!

SNOOKS

Composuit.

DACCA,
 9th June, 1866.

¹ *Manilla's* would perhaps be more correct.

APPENDIX D

SIMSON'S ADVENTURE WITH THE BOAR

I was only badly hurt once out pig-sticking. It happened thus, on the 14th April, 1858, when the great Indian Mutiny was about ended :—As usual I was pig-sticking alone, that is I had no companion who could ride ; but my assistant, a young competition wallah, just fresh from Oxford, was with me, but he only walked or rode on an elephant. It was between Hingootea and Chur Durvesh that we put up a fine hog in some “kewah bon,” or screw-pine jungle. When first roused, he jumped at the elephant and marked him with a deep cut between the eyes, and the mahout remarked that the hog was exceedingly fierce. I was riding a chestnut Arab for the first time ; he proved cowardly, was shy, and it was with great difficulty that I could hold him when the hog charged, which it did repeatedly and with great pluck. I got several good prods at him, and at last managed to send the spear nearly two feet into his body ; I was obliged to leave the spear sticking in him. I had broken one spear in him and could get no other quickly. The hog sank as if dying, and I got off to look at a wound which the horse had received owing to his shying and unsteadiness ; the cut was not a bad one. I then went towards the hog on foot ; I saw by his eye that he still meant mischief, so I told my assistant that we had better get farther away : in attempting to get away, my foot caught in a creeper and I fell ; in an instant he was down on me ; he tossed me over, and then began biting and cutting at me ; my chief endeavour was to keep him from ripping my stomach or cutting me in the inside of the thighs where the large arteries lie. I kept my legs firmly together, kicking him in the face with both feet, and somehow, either in the kicking or from a bite, my big toe was broken ; I tried to keep his head off with my *solah topee*, but this was cut to atoms. I shoved him away with my hands, but he snapped off the end of my thumb. He then gashed me awfully on the outside of the left thigh ; one wound was eleven inches long, and the points of the tusks came out in two places. Then some natives rushed in, belaboured the hog with *lattees*, and got hold of my arm and dragged me away. There we lay, looking at each other. The hog died in about five minutes. I lay bleeding and sent for a *palankeen* ; before it was brought, I told my assistant to look at a certain spot and he would see the end of my thumb, which I saw fall there ; he found it at once, and talked some nonsense about having it joined on again, as had been done to some one at Oxford. However, he put the bit of thumb down, and it was at once carried off

by a crow (*Corvus splendens*), and that was the end of the end of my thumb. A palankeen was brought; I was rolled into it and carried home—seven miles—blood dropping all the way.

The doctor met me at the door and had me carried to my bed; the wounds in my thigh were washed and sewn up; the splintered thumb-bone was next cut even with scissors. The doctor made light of the toe, but said, "If you don't get lockjaw, you have every chance of recovery this time." It was six weeks before I could stand; I, however, managed in ten days to sit up in bed and to do business, dictating orders and letters and signing papers. The first time I could get my hand down to my toe, I found it was broken badly. As the Medical Board said briefly afterwards, "The fracture was there; the ankylosis is complete, and we regret to say permanent." In this way I learnt a good deal about the treatment of wounds from wild boars' tusks.—*Letters on Sport in Eastern Bengal, By Frank B. Simson (Bengal C.S. retired).*

CHAPTER IX

CHITTAGONG, SECOND VISIT.—1867-8

By daylight on the 25th November I was at Daoodkandi, and rode in the thirty odd miles to Comilla, but had to leave my things behind, the intelligent Police Sub-Inspector having sent back to the station the bullock cart ordered for their conveyance, instead of keeping it till my arrival. At Comilla I was hospitably entertained by Pakenham, manager for the Messrs. Courjon, French landholders owning large estates in Tippera and Noacolly, who also kindly lent me some clothes, for I had only those I stood up in. Here a halt was called to let the cart come up and get on towards Chittagong; and a few days passed pleasantly at my old station.

On Saturday, the 30th November, a lovely cold weather morning, I left Comilla on Pakenham's smart little Burma pony, reached the Fenny River in due course, and finding "Xit" on the other side, got to the Zorawulgunge dák bungalow before evening. Cart and servants had arrived, with my dogs and "Joeko" the monkey, which last rode on top of the gári, doubtless to her own satisfaction. My old acquaintance the khansama was still in charge, and I had a chat with him after dinner before turning in. Next morning the traps started early, and "Kate" also marched ahead. *Chota haziri* disposed of and the bill discharged, I commended my venerable friend to the care of the Prophet; and mounting little "Xit," soon caught up the cart, progressing at the usual mile-an-hour rate of Bengali bullocks. So checking my steed I proceeded at a more sober pace, for it was no use going on and leaving things to follow—I had had enough of that at Daoodkandi—and experience teaches that servants travel best when they know their master is behind

them. Nor did I wish to hurry. The old road was beautiful as ever, and it was a pleasure simply to ride along and admire the well-remembered scenery.¹

“Kate” carried me bravely after “Xit” had done his stage, and brought me to Seetakoond by about 10 o’clock; where having no other horse I halted; and after breakfast feasted my eyes on the hills, here culminating in the Seetakoond Peak, some 1,100 feet above sea-level, the highest point in the range, a place of pilgrimage and object of veneration to devout Hindoos. The spot owes its sanctity to a natural phenomenon which will be described presently. From below, the peak looked so near that I was tempted to walk up; but before I came down again had got a lesson in judging distance: it was a much bigger job than it seemed. Leaving the road near the bungalow, the track led for some distance through native homesteads, shaded by closely-planted groves of betel-palm: these presently ceased, the surroundings grew wilder, and the path began to rise. The ascent, at first very gradual, became rapidly steeper, and zigzagged up the face of the hill to a flight of masonry steps which apparently led to the summit, but I did not get so far: my legs, accustomed to the flat surroundings of Daeca, were soon tired; the sun was getting low; and I concluded to return. On the lower slopes of the hill was the residence of the Mahant, or high priest in charge of the shrine, a cluster of brick buildings in which, no doubt, the sons of Levi had comfortable quarters. Their water-supply was obtained by a very primitive aqueduct—a succession of slender troughs made from stems of the betel-palm, resting on bamboo trestles and neatly joined so as to make a continuous channel. Through this the water ran clear and sparkling from a spring higher up the hill, which, overflowing from a lovely crystal pool under a huge boulder, went rippling down to supply the wants of the good priests below. It was purity itself: no need to filter such delicious water. I could not resist the temptation to dip my head into this natural reservoir and take a drink, cool and refreshing after the hot walk.

Although far short of the top, the point reached was high enough to command a fine view. North and south stretched the hills; along their

¹ The “developers” have not spared Chittagong, and a railway now runs between this road and the hills.

base a strip of lowland spread out like a map, paddy-fields now golden with fast-ripening crops, villages nestling in patches of darker foliage, from which feathery bamboos and tall palm-trees rose conspicuous, their yellow-green fronds waving in masses—a vast canopy supported by a forest of slender shafts. Beyond lay the sea, calm and placid at this season, its unruffled surface shining like polished steel, the island of Sundeeep sleeping in the sunlight to the westward, whither the orb of day was fast sinking; a lovely panorama, seen to perfection in the soft evening light. The lengthening shadows warned me not to linger; so down I started, and once clear of the masonry stairs, which were steep and tiring whether in the upward or downward way, was glad to reach easier ground. Suddenly the stillness was broken by the short, sharp “bell” of a barking deer, resounding among the hills, now louder and now fainter as the animal shifted its ground or the evening breeze rose and fell. There is a strange fascination in these forest sounds. The wild cry of the fish-eagle, circling majestically over some lonely blue; the crow of the jungle-cock at daybreak when the eastern sky is brightening over the tree-tops; the peafowl’s scream; the piercing yell of the Hoolook, echoing like goblin laughter through the leafy glades;—each voice of the wilderness has its own peculiar charm. And perhaps the most thrilling utterance of all—once heard never forgotten—is the snarling yawn of the tiger as he rouses at dusk, to sally forth on his stealthy night-prowl. On this occasion there was no such alarming note in the sylvan concert, and I got safely back to the dāk bungalow pretty well tired out, and quite ready for dinner.

Three miles south of Seetakoond a path branches off into the hills to a place called Bulwakoond, about a mile and a half from the main road, which is famous for a peculiar hot spring, and on this account held sacred. In all my journeys to and from Chittagong I had never seen this, and having just now plenty of time, resolved not to lose the opportunity. So next day “Xit” and I turned off the road, and struck the path that wound through the hills to the foot of a flight of steps, giving access to an enclosed courtyard, with masonry houses and shrines, and a small detached building over the holy spring. Inside was a gloomy vault that re-echoed every sound, and steps led down to the water. The spring itself was confined in a small pool or basin, a few feet only in diameter,

and was bubbling up like water on the boil. As the bubbles came to the top they broke and emitted little flashes of flame, and fire was thus dancing all over the top of the seething water, with a tiny *poppling* sound as the bubbles burst. On one side the flame rushed continuously through a hole in the masonry like the blast of a miniature furnace, and afforded a light for my cheroot. The water was not hot, but rather lukewarm. The explanation of this curious phenomenon is I believe that an inflammable gas, generated by volcanic action underground, finding its way out through fissures, ignites by contact with the air, or being once lighted, continues to burn. A jet of similar burning vapour has been seen issuing from the ground (not through water as at Bulwakoond) near the Mahant's house on the Seetakoond Hill. This is said to be erratic in its character, coming out now at one point and now at another. The yellow-robed priests politely showed me all that was to be seen—no doubt they find the fiery well a productive source of income. My funds being at a low ebb, I could not afford to be lavish, but gave some small coin, and left the holy men violently squabbling over its distribution.

Arriving at Chittagong about dusk, I had some trouble in finding my way, long absence having confused my recollection of localities. The house for which I was bound, formerly occupied by the Collector, stood on "Tempest Hill," and was now tenanted by Messrs. Kilburn and Maxim, the former Collector of Customs, Harbour Master and Port Conservator, the latter a German merchant from Hamburg. Kilburn, whom I had met at Comilla, had offered to put me up on arrival. The presence of his chum indicated changes that had taken place since I first knew Chittagong. There was then almost no non-official society; now there was a small but rising colony of merchants and tea-planters, and the port showed signs of greater commercial activity.

In outward appearance Chittagong was not much altered, but in other respects it was no longer the same. Influx of trade was not the only change that had come over the place. The regiment had left, and its lines were occupied by the District Police. The Fairies' Lake was deserted; the bathing house a ruin. The racket-court was shabby, neglected, and little used. So different from old times, when four evenings out of the six this was the regular place of meeting. No croquet; no pleasant walks after church on Sunday to the riverside or

Scandal Corner—these were things of the past. After a lively place like Dacca, Chittagong seemed rather dull at first, but one soon gets used to new surroundings. Kilburn and Maxim kindly proposed that I should chum with them, which I was glad to do and be saved the trouble of house-hunting.

On Thursday, the 5th December, I was sworn in as Joint Magistrate by Wilkinson, my old chum, who had remained at Chittagong ever since we were Assistants together in 1863-4, and was now almost the oldest official resident. He was in charge of the Collector's office pending the arrival of Gadsby, who was in orders to officiate. Wilkinson himself was just leaving for Patna, having been appointed a Divisional Inspector of Registration.

On taking my seat as Joint Magistrate I became the centre of attraction to a crowd of *mookhtars* and hangers-on of the Court, who, with the general public, thronged in to look at the new *Hakim* as if he had been a wild beast. This is the regular thing on the occasion of a new arrival, who, whether he likes it or not, must submit to be stared at till public curiosity is satisfied. Theoretically, an Indian Cutcherry is an open Court, to which all have free access; but one does not hesitate to eject any troublesome spectator, which indeed is often the only way to keep tolerable order; and on this occasion one noisy individual was fined for contempt of Court,—much to his disgust, no doubt. As a rule, native magistrates allow more latitude than Europeans: they do not seem to mind a row going on, and can sit quietly hearing a case in the midst of a Babel of sound that would drive most people crazy.

Friday, December 6th.—The following is from my old note-book: “Glorious morning; clear to seaward; beautiful mist rolling over the hill-tops to landward.” Our house on “Tempest Hill,” one of the highest in the station, commanded a fine view in all directions. Chittagong was noted for its scenery, and when to natural beauties were added the delights of a bright sky and the brisk atmosphere of a cold weather morning, life was enjoyable indeed. On Saturday evening we managed to get up a game at rackets. The old court was sadly in need of repair;—plaster falling off the front wall in huge flakes, the bottom board badly sprung and detached from the masonry, while the ragged nets at the top waved mournfully in the breeze. But it was *rackets* once more, and

hardly less enjoyable for being played under difficulties. Next day the Calcutta steamer arrived, bringing Lord Ulick Burke to officiate as Commissioner in place of Gordon Y., who had gone home; Gadsby to act as Collector; and Duncannon, the Civil Surgeon, whose wife had just come out.

Kilburn being Collector of Customs, Harbour Master, and general top-sawyer in the Marine Department, had at his disposal a little 45-ton schooner called the *Swallow*, which tempted us to take a cruise; so on Sunday, the 15th December, we walked down to the Sudder Ghát, whence the Custom-house *beauleah* (barge) conveyed us to the schooner, which had dropped down the river with the tide. Outside the sea was calm, the wind *nil*; and the commissariat being well supplied we wiled away the time with the aid of light literature and tobacco and had a very pleasant "drift," oscillating between the river-mouth and Sundeeep Island, the Seetakoond Range a conspicuous land-mark to the eastward. Towards evening a breeze sprang up which carried us back to the Kurnafulee; and next morning we were at anchor again off the town.

Christmas Day was kept with a dinner at the Judge's, to which everybody was invited. After dinner a charade was got up, which as a dramatic performance would have been more successful had the actors known their parts better. However, the audience seemed to enjoy it, being in fits of laughter which gradually spread to the stage, so at least there was plenty of merriment.

Kilburn and I had planned a trip up the river during the Christmas week, intending to camp for a day or two in the hills, where jungle-fowl and other game were to be found. So on the 26th we started, but losing the tide did not reach our destination till nightfall. We moored under the bank, and after a stroll through the hills returned to dinner on board the boat. Just as we had turned in came a messenger from Gadsby with an official missive and a private note, both marked "urgent." The contents referred to a complaint made to the Magistrate which in his opinion required the immediate return of the Joint Magistrate to headquarters. This was annoying; but an order is an order, and our plans were thus upset. So next day, after a tantalising glimpse of the tent, pitched at the foot of some nice jungly hills, we turned our boat's head and went skimming down stream with the tide to Anti Mohammed's Ghát, a wooden

jetty higher up the river than the Sudder Ghát, and so a convenient starting-point for the eastward.

At Cutcherry I found that the business on hand was to hear a case instituted by the master of one of the ships in port against some of his men for abusive language. There being no appearance for the prosecution, the charges were dismissed. But on the following day there was more trouble with the tars, and this time they were brought into Court. They belonged to the British ship *Ilione*, from Liverpool with salt, and loading rice at Chittagong, the captain of which appeared to be a bit of a bully, and his men a set of disorderly ruffians. They stoutly objected to go on board and return to their duty, though the consequence of persisting in their refusal was clearly explained to them. Chittagong was visited by a good many European and American vessels during the N.E. monsoon (cold weather), and at this time of the year there were always a lot of sailors in port, who gave a good deal of trouble to the local authorities. "Marine" cases were not made over to native magistrates: the District Officer had neither time nor inclination for such work; so the bulk of them fell to the Joint Magistrate. On Sundays especially the men were a great nuisance; being allowed to go on shore to "enjoy themselves," by which Jack often understands getting very drunk. To deal with these men, two European constables were attached to the District Police force.

On Sunday, the 29th December, I went exploring along the Turtle Tank Road, one of the prettiest near the station, passing through a belt of rice cultivation, bordered on each side by low jungly hills. At the Turtle Tank is an old Mahomedan shrine known as the *Sultán Bájít ka Durga* (Sultan Bajit's mosque), standing on the edge of the hills: the place is named from a number of turtles that live in the tank, and are fed by the priests. From this point a woodcutters' path struck into the jungle, which seemed to be chiefly resorted to by charcoal burners and buffalo herdsmen. Going along this I came across two "grave-diggers" (Indian badgers)¹ and saw four or five pheasants² in a thicket: returning I

¹ Same as the *baloo soor*, ante, p. 64.

² The *motoora* or black pheasant, already mentioned as met with in the Tippera Hills,—a crested bird, blue-black feathers tipped with white near the tail. The cock has a scarlet wattle. This is probably the pheasant called *Kaleej* in the North-West.

put up what looked like a very big snipe, and may have been a woodcock, but it was too dark to see.

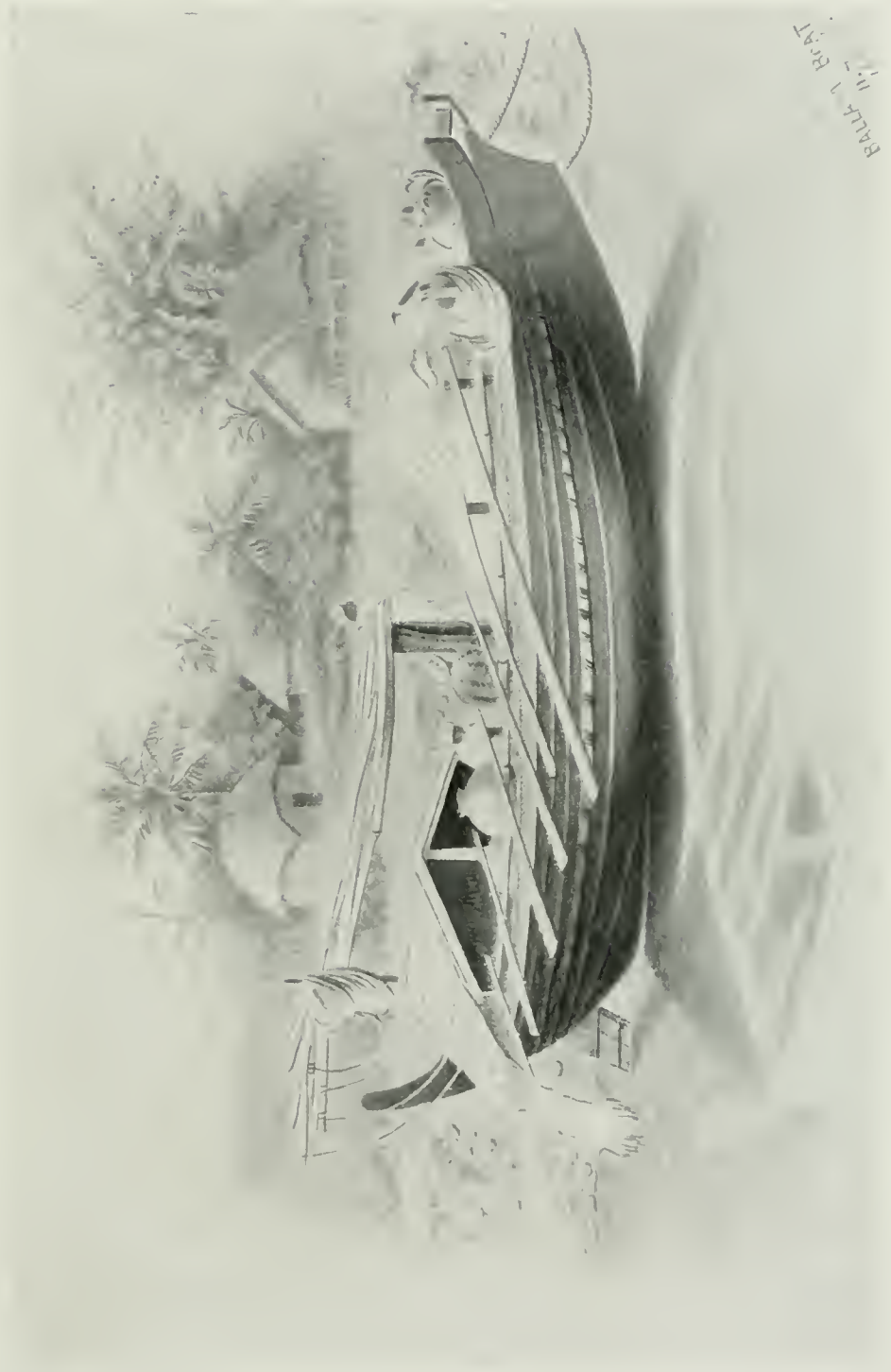
Next day there was a new arrival in Capt. Holt, Assistant to Nuthill of the Kheddah Department, who had just come in on a flying visit from Ramoo in the south, towards the Arracan border, where a Kheddah was in progress. He gave great accounts of *shikár* in that direction, but said the jungle was dense and the game hard to get at.

1868.

New Year's Day passed without any noteworthy event, and on Sunday the 5th January Dr. Keating, Deputy-Inspector-General of Hospitals, arrived on tour from Dacca. He had a *ballám* boat, a coasting craft much used by traders between Bengal and Burma, stouter built than Bengali river boats and designed for rougher water. They go to sea in the fine season, keeping near the land, have fair weatherly qualities, and though light are strong, the streaks or planks tied with rattan cane instead of being nailed or bolted with iron. They are flat-bottomed, have good carrying capacity, and draw little water. *Ballám* boats are not so high in the stern as the river-craft of Bengal: their appearance is less unwieldy, and even graceful.

That evening I had a bit of luck. Going to my favourite haunt, the Turtle Tank, with my gun, I saw a snipe get up in the paddy-fields between the road and the hills. I marked him down, made a rapid stalk, and as he rose the second time fired, and the bird fell! I wrung its neck, and stuck it conspicuously in my belt, to show that I had been snipe-shooting and had bagged my bird. It is astonishing how pleased with himself a bad marksman is after making a hit. I could honestly say that I bagged all I fired at that day, for not another shot did I get. Perhaps this was as well: a second chancee might have spoiled the average. Going along my woodcutters' path I met an old fellow with whom I had exchanged a few words on the previous Sunday. He seemed to take a fatherly interest in me, for he said: "*Suno! akela mat jao. Sher bahut hai.*" (Listen! don't go alone. There are many tigers.) I went further into the hills this time, and had a delightful ramble and scramble. The moon shone brightly as I cantered home on little "Xit."

BALLA 1 BRIGHT



The *budmashes* (bad characters) in the bazaar had been active lately, and several impudent thefts had been committed. This was gall and wormwood to Kingston, our energetic Policeman, whose men failed to catch the offenders. As Joint Magistrate and specially in charge of Police matters, I was taken into his confidence, and after laying our heads together we determined to try the effect of patrolling; so for several nights, or rather in the small hours, we went the rounds of station and bazaar. Our ponies must have wondered why they were taken out at such a time. These nightly promenades were pleasant as a variety, and may possibly have had some moral effect, but no captures resulted.

Chittagong of course boasted a Municipality, of which the Magistrate was (*ex officio*) chairman. This was before the days of "Local Self-Government,"¹ under which the Chairman is elected, and the District Magistrate, unless so elected, only exercises general supervision. I had been appointed Vice-Chairman, and attended a meeting on the 8th January, at which it struck me that the non-official members were more independent than those in a similar position at Dacca, and disposed to maintain their views, even sometimes in opposition to those of the officials. More of this body later on.

On Monday the 13th January sailors were again brought up, this time from the British barque *Thurso*, for refusing to work. Like Mr. Midshipman Easy I argued the point with them, and explained that the alternative to work on board ship was work in jail. However, they had evidently made up their minds for a spell on shore, and did not seem to care much whether this was taken inside a jail or not. So refusing to hear reason the tars were consigned to durance vile, and made over to the custody of the Jail Darogah.

This day I had the satisfaction of confiscating a lot of contraband powder under the Arms Act. In a frontier district like Chittagong it was necessary to enforce this strictly; and as it was, the hill-tribes managed to get a much larger supply of arms and ammunition than they had any business to possess. Lord Ulick was determined to work the Act to some purpose, and in my subordinate position I was no less resolved to co-operate to the best of my ability. Perhaps I was actuated

¹ In native lingo "Lokil sluff,"—an unluckily appropriate epithet, considering how some of these newly-constituted authorities have floundered in the mire.

not more by considerations of frontier policy than a desire to protect wild birds and animals from wholesale slaughter by native gunners. The average Bengali has no notion of sport: the idea of giving anything a fair chance seems to him foolish in the extreme: as a rule he can hit nothing either running or flying—like the Frenchman in *Punch*, he “will wait till he stops!”—but will creep about or sit for hours on the chance of getting a pot shot. Cheap guns of Monghyr make (imitations of the English article) were to be found in most villages, which usually harboured one or more *Pahlwáns*¹ or professed *shikáris*, whose business it was to prowl round and fire at anything they could get near; and this was probably one reason why so little game was to be seen, notwithstanding the abundance of cover. My own particular beats near the station were soon purged of these dusky Nimrods; but further afield there was nothing to check them but the restriction of gun-licences and the difficulty of getting ammunition. It is easy to rail at the Arms Act as an arbitrary law, justifiable in a country like India only by administrative necessity. Without weapons no doubt villagers cannot cope with animals dangerous to life or destructive to property; and where arms are really needed, licences may be freely granted. But for one gun that is *bona fide* used against beasts of prey, pigs, deer, and other enemies of the cultivator, there can be little doubt that hundreds are employed in the ruthless destruction of beautiful birds and other harmless creatures whose presence in the jungle is one of its greatest charms. The only way of minimising the evil was to enquire into the character and antecedents of applicants for licences, and limit the number granted for each village; and imperfect as this method was, it acted as a certain check. But the working of the Act depended much on the individual views of local officers, and was consequently unequal, some Magistrates being stricter than others.

Among the many reports and returns that are periodically furnished by a District Officer, the Annual Police Report is one of the most important. This is a bulky document, bristling with figures and statistics, which have to be analysed, explained, and commented on, and on which all sorts of theories may be constructed. Explanations of any marked variations in the figured statements are always required by Government;

¹ Literally, athlete or wrestler.

and sometimes the reporting officer's ingenuity is sorely taxed to find one that can be taken as satisfactory. Such fluctuations are often open to more than one interpretation ; and it might amuse an outsider (these things are too troublesome to be amusing to the compilers) to note the different views sometimes taken by different people of the same facts. For instance, one table shows an increase in the number of thefts as compared with the previous year. This may be attributed by an optimist to greater activity on the part of the Police, or to increased confidence in the administration, shown by the people's greater readiness to complain. Or, taking a pessimistic view, the inference may be as easily drawn that thefts have increased because the criminal classes have not been properly looked after by the Police. So with the recovery of stolen property ; if the returns show a higher percentage of property recovered to property stolen, it may be said that this speaks well for the detective ability of the Police ; or it may be held that the figures indicate a casual fluctuation that has no significance ; or else, that there has in fact been no increase, but that the amount of property stolen in the previous year had been manifestly exaggerated by complainants, while in the year under report there being less overstatement of loss, the percentage of recoveries is apparently but not really better. Thus changes are rung on the same statistics, and one is reminded of the saying that figures may be made to prove anything. Nor does it follow that an inference once drawn will remain unchallenged, for these reports pass through several hands before they reach the Government for whose information they are intended. The District Superintendent who starts the ball and puts the Report together is naturally disposed to make out a good case for the reputation of his own men, and generally leans to the optimistic view. The Magistrate, on the other hand, who next gets the Report, especially if a young man with a reputation to make for smartness, may receive the Superintendent's remarks with mistrust and cynical comments, indicating that in his opinion the Police are no better than they should be, and that their chief's estimate of their performances is far too flattering. The Report next goes to the Commissioner, whose exalted position enables him to hold the balance even between his jealous subordinates, and who perhaps has his own theories. Finally, the Inspector-General goes to work ; rolls up the Divisional Returns into Tables for

the whole Province ;—criticises the statements, reviews the figures, adds his own comments, and sends it in—a mighty volume by this time—to the Secretariat. Thus by the time the Report reaches Government its contents have been pretty well threshed out, and the highest authority has plenty of materials for the Resolution which has to be recorded, and which, being published in the Gazette and communicated to the officers concerned, finally closes the incident.

The Police Report falls due early in the year, and its preparation for Chittagong had been entrusted to me by Gadsby, who was just now away on tour in the interior : this being work that required “sitting down to,” I got up and tackled it early on the 14th January, when the house was quiet and free from interruptions. After this I went down to office and held early Cutcherry, where cases under the Arms Act figured largely. Being in charge of the Jail, I next visited that, and in the course of my rounds saw the sailors at work. Two were grinding at the oil-mills and one was digging. It struck me that they were a bad lot, as they did not seem to care a bit for the disgrace of being in jail and having to work cheek by jowl with native prisoners. These occupations filled up the morning, and I did not get home till near 12 o’clock. After breakfast I again went to Cutcherry, and finally got clear of my day’s work at about 5 o’clock, when, being in want of a little fresh air, I had “Kate” saddled and took a spin down the breezy Tiger Pass, one of the prettiest of the many pretty roads at Chittagong, and on to the Sudder Ghát, inhaling whiffs of ozone from the river and not distant sea. As usual at this season, there were several merchantmen in port : I counted some five or six big 3-masters, mostly British. The paria sloops¹ and native craft lay mostly lower down the river. As already observed, Chittagong had of late been growing commercially, and was developing a lively trade in rice and other country produce, my chum Maxim being one of the speculators. A railway had been projected from Chittagong to the Megna in the Tippera District, opposite a mart in Mymensingh called Bhoirab Bazaar, but the scheme appeared to hang fire, chiefly for want of a Government guarantee ; and it is only lately that a line has been actually made, not to Bhoirab Bazaar, but to Chandpore, another point on the Megna.

¹ Country-built vessels, generally brig or schooner-rigged.

On the 29th January I had to superintend the measurement of a *chur* in the Kurnafoolee with a view to re-settlement of the land-revenue. This is not nearly so troublesome to Revenue Officers as the Pudda and other big rivers to the west; but even the Kurnafoolee has its cases of alluvion and diluvion, channels changing, banks receding or advancing, islands appearing, disappearing, re-appearing or assuming different shapes and sizes according to the endless vagaries of the unstable element, constant in one respect only, being ever on the rush. Tramping over the treeless area with the measuring party was hot and thirsty work, even in January.

Going with the dogs for my usual walk to Turtle Tank on Sunday February 2nd I met a herd of buffaloes in the jungle, returning from their daily graze. These animals have a way of sticking their noses in the air and staring hard at anything they don't understand or don't like, including white people, which is embarrassing, especially when there are several in a narrow path, all pointing steadily at the intruder. In this case the matter was complicated by the dogs, to which the buffaloes objected. The only thing to be done was to walk on, looking as unconcerned as possible, and we got through all right; but village buffaloes are not always harmless. During my ramble I came upon a Government elephant that had been to the jungle for *charra* (forage), taken ill on the way back. The poor beast had fallen down, was trembling all over and breathing laboriously. The mahout said it was a kind of fever, and was at his wits' end to know what to do; so on my way back I told him to go and get help from the *Pheelkhánah* (elephant depôt) at the station, but the elephant died.

Nuthill had been in the interior on Kheddah work, and as I was toiling up the steep ascent of Tempest Hill one morning after my usual ride and visit to the Jail, he *cooe'd* to me from his hill (opposite ours) and sang out something about elephants caught, which I could not quite make out. However I bellowed in response and afterwards called round, when he told me he had captured fifty-six elephants, and Holt thirty-one, and that more were surrounded. The business however had not been done without mishap. The natives told off to guard the stockade got talking; the elephants alarmed broke back, smashed through the palisades, and five men were killed.

Chittagong was once considered a sanitarium, and in Sir William Jones's time people used to come from Calcutta to enjoy the sea-breezes; but of late years the place had got a bad name for fever, the prevalence of which was accounted for in various ways. Whatever the cause, the fact was undoubted, and it was clearly desirable that something should if possible be done to make the station less unhealthy. Among other insanitary conditions pointed out by the doctors was the dense vegetation, which if it did not engender at least harboured malaria, and by checking the free circulation of air certainly hindered its dispersal. Dr. Wiseman, late Civil Surgeon (now at Dacca) had been constantly urging this upon the municipal authorities, who at last endorsed his views, and issued an order limiting the number of trees to be allowed per *biga*¹ in each garden. This order had never been thoroughly enforced, nor were the Municipal Commissioners unanimous in approving it. A strong minority had always opposed Wiseman's theories as extreme and not quite correct. Many trees were cut down in his time, but little had been done since he left. The owners of gardens were dead against the order; and their objections will be understood when it is explained that Chittagong is a great place for plantations of *supári* or areca-nut (betel) palms, in which the trees grow by thousands, so close together as to form with their crowns a complete shelter from the sun. Considering the shape of the tree—a tall slender shaft topped by a tuft of plume-like fronds—it will appear that this means very close packing indeed. I measured some, the stems of which were scarcely more than a foot or 18 inches apart. Betel-nuts being in general demand, these trees were worth money, and valued by the owners at some eight annas (one shilling) apiece; and if the above plan of clearing had been fully carried out, some three-fourths or more would probably have been cut down. Looking at the matter dispassionately at this distance of time I must admit that the Doctor's theories, even if correct from a sanitary point of view, were impracticable, or at least could not have been carried out without undue hardship to the people. But being then a new broom, and having before me the example of another enthusiast, Lord Ulick to wit, who plunged into sanitation as energetically as everything he took up, I was all for radical reform.

¹ A Bengal *biga* is about one-third of an acre.

As Vice-Chairman of the Municipal Committee I had executive authority, and the overseers and other servants of the corporation were directly under my orders. So on Friday the 7th February I collected my forces—the Road Overseer and his sub—and swooped down from Tempest Hill upon the unsuspecting *supári* gardeners. I soon found that it was one thing to resolve that the jungle should be cleared, and another thing to get it done. It was a big business, not only from the immense number of trees and the quantity of dense undergrowth, but also from the passive opposition of the owners. Natives quite understand the value of *vis inertiae* as an anti-motive power, and a drag on the too rapid movement of Western reform. Since those days there has arisen such a craze for sanitation, and District Officers have been so pestered for information and worried with the fads of sanitary monomaniacs, that the topic has become wearisome, and one can almost sympathise with the attitude of these conservative Orientals. I soon had enough of jungle-clearing for one morning, and doubt if much was done towards letting daylight into the palm groves, where the dim religious light—a cool transparency of golden green—was after all very beautiful, and a grateful change from the overpowering glare of the midday sun.

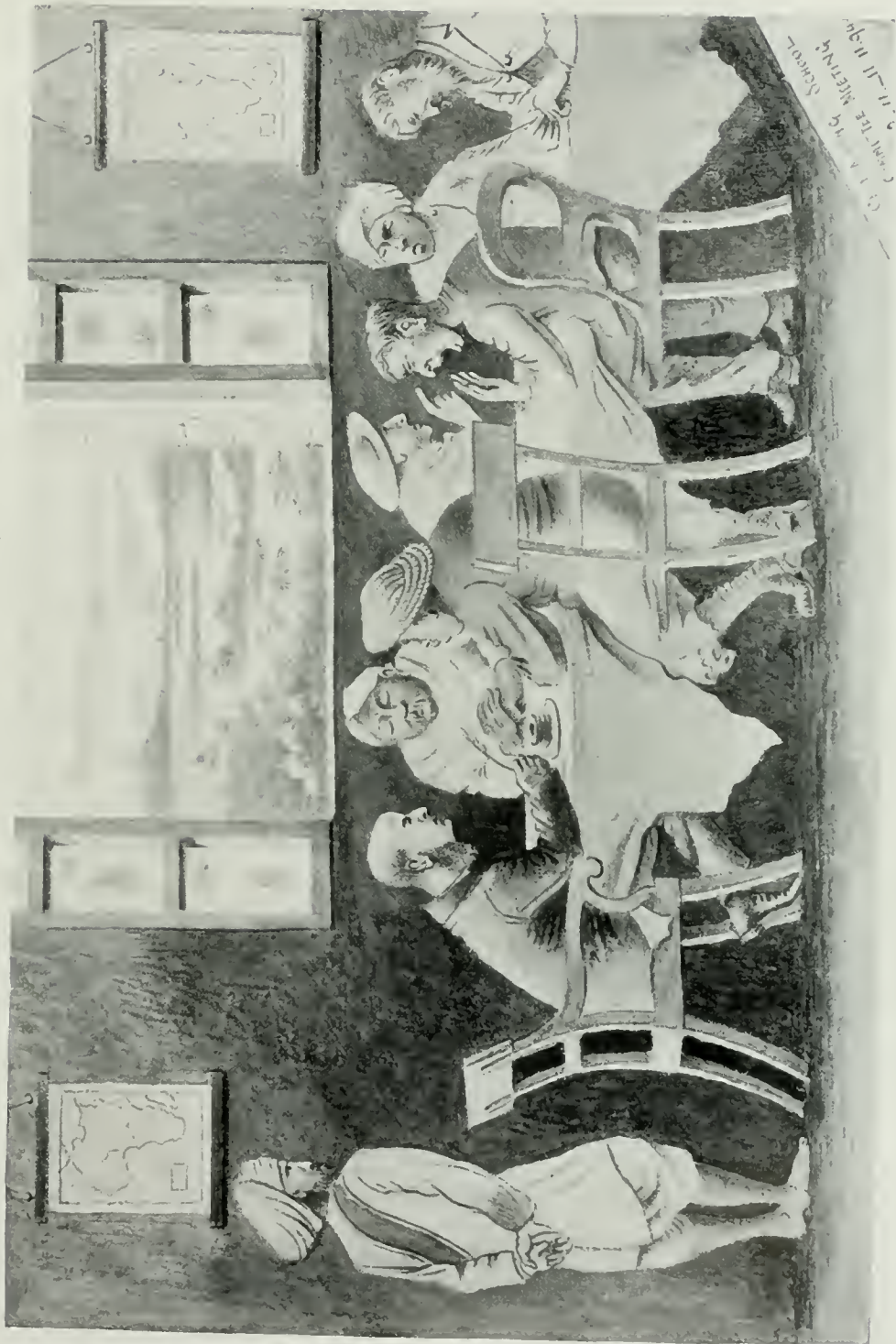
On the 8th February the Calcutta steamer brought two additions to the station—Rossall to officiate as Additional Judge (Chittagong being a litigious district, an extra hand at the judicial mill is often needed), and a young fellow named Manton, who had been at sea in Green's service, but having been employed as Special Deputy Collector on Famine work in Orissa was now on probation as Deputy Magistrate and Collector, with the prospect, after passing the prescribed examinations, of being drafted permanently into the Subordinate Executive Service. He put up with us as a temporary arrangement.

Sundays were always spent out of doors as much as possible, for the sake of the fresh air and exercise. One of these, the 9th of February, was a glorious breezy day : in the morning I had a spin on "Kate" round by the Dacea Road, past Sir William Jones's ruined house and back through the Tippera Pass—in those days a good road through pretty scenery—and in the afternoon went for a prowl as usual in the woods near Turtle Tank. The carcase of the elephant that had died a week before

lay near the path, a gruesome body swollen to an enormous size, where Beelzebub, god of flies, was holding high carnival. The stench was awful—the air must have been tainted for something like a quarter of a mile. To-day the bag comprised one blue and one green pigeon (the last a pot shot)—also a crow-pheasant which falling into a pool of water was carefully fished out. I thought it was a jungle hen, and was disgusted to find out my mistake. A crow-pheasant is a red and black bird with long tail, rather like a pheasant in appearance, but worthless for the game-bag.

Like other headquarter stations, Chittagong had its District School Committee, which under the Director of Public Instruction had the local management of educational matters. Natives mustered strong on the Committee, or, to be more accurate, Hindoo members were numerous, the Musalmáns looking rather askance at our school system, especially the study of English. This attitude of the Mahomedans is notorious throughout Bengal; and a knowledge of English being nowadays more and more insisted on as essential for Government employ, the consequence is that for every Musalmán so employed there are probably ten or twenty Hindoos. So in Government or aided schools where English is taught, the Hindoo students far outnumber the Musalmáns. This may to some extent be caused by a feeling of pride on the part of those who were rulers in India before the British, and who do not care to rub shoulders in office and class-room with those whom they still consider their inferiors. It is also believed to be partly the work of the priestly class, who are jealous of the influence of Western knowledge and ideas on the orthodoxy of their followers. The more supple Hindoo has no such scruples, and eagerly absorbs the teaching furnished by our schools, which affords the best passport to the height of a native's ambition, a Government appointment. Of late years attempts have been made, and with some success, to attract Mahomedans in greater numbers to the schools and Government service.

Anderson was Chairman of the Chittagong Committee, with Rossall as Secretary, and meetings were held in the Judge's Cutcherry, on a high hill commanding a lovely view of the river and distant hills. I was a member, but not fond of attending. So much time was wasted in talk, and apart from this it was difficult to feel much interest in the work



of a department which exists for the everlasting multiplication of schools, and of that very bumptious being the Bengali student, whose one idea is to learn *kalam pesha* (the trade of the pen), other occupations being beneath his notice, and qualify for Government employ. Quill drivers being already a drug in the market,¹ it follows that in many cases these aspirations cannot be satisfied; and the result is the creation of a large and increasing class of half-educated idlers, who if they only knew it have good grounds of complaint against a system which, while unfitting them for the occupations of their fathers, fits them for no other that is likely to be within their reach. Many of these on leaving school, failing to find an occupation suited to their notions, become what are called *ummedwárs* (expectants) or candidates for employment—a set of Oriental Micawbers, waiting for something to turn up, and in the meantime not ashamed to sponge on their more fortunate relations, who are expected to support these lazy loafers in addition to their own families till such time as they may (or may not) find employment. The Hindoo family system, amiable and beneficent in many of its aspects, fosters in a most pernicious manner this class of “educated” paupers.

On Monday the 17th February we had a visitor in C. B. Clarke, of Queens' College Cambridge, Inspector of Schools South-Eastern (Dacca) Division. This gentleman turned up unexpectedly in a destitute condition and faded suit of flannel dittoes, having just been wrecked in the Noacolly River (so-called—it is in fact a huge arm of the sea, very dangerous navigation sometimes), and lost everything including his papers, which to a scientific man was probably the greatest loss of all. The “bore” or tidal wave had come rushing up the channel when the *mánjhi* (captain) of the boat was not prepared, and capsized the vessel, a Dacca *budgerow*, by no means a safe craft for these big waters. Clarke bore his losses like a philosopher, and spoke calmly of what must have been a narrow escape from drowning; for he had to hang on to a piece of the wreck for some hours before he was picked up.

Thursday the 20th was a dull cloudy day, and rain fell for the first time in the year. The night was dark as pitch, and stormy. Having

¹ It is commonly said that the present market value of a B.A. of the Calcutta University is Rs. 25 a month, which is the pay of almost the lowest grade of English-knowing clerks in Government offices.

work to do I got up about half-past 5; the thunder was then still grumbling. As the day wore on the weather got worse,—towards noon it was blowing hard, and the rain came down in torrents. Penheiro, the Commissioner's Personal Assistant, came in by *dák* from the Mofussil (he had been on tour with his chief) in a great state of mind, having expected that Lord and Lady Ulick, who were coming from Noacolly in the little Port Schooner *Swallow*, would have arrived before him. But there they were not: the weather was dirty and threatening, with a strong wind blowing up the Bay, dead against any vessel trying to make Chittagong from the northward. There would be a nasty sea on, and the *Swallow* was not supposed to be particularly staunch. The situation warranted some uneasiness. Penheiro wildly suggested to send out the gunboat, a little screw steamer used for river-work and quite unfit to go to sea. The suggestion did not commend itself to the marine authorities, and there was nothing for it but to wait the course of events, so we had recourse to our telescopes. It was hazy and thick to seaward, but we discovered what looked like the schooner lying outside at anchor, apparently waiting for a shift in the wind. Later in the day I made her out again, beating down the coast under easy sail. So riding down to the Custom House I got hold of Tomlinson, Kilburn's Assistant, and brought him up our hill to have a look. He said it was the schooner sure enough; that she was all right, and it would be no good going down, as we could do nothing. And so it proved: next morning she was lying at her usual berth off the Sudder Ghát, looking none the worse for her knocking about. The Commissioner and Lady Ulick had had a bad time of it, as we afterwards heard—nothing to eat for twenty-four hours, everything wet and wretched, the vessel pitching and tossing, now and then taking in a sea and giving a shower-bath to her passengers, whose feelings between the miseries of nausea and other discomfords, and the possibility of driving on a lee shore, must have been unenviable.

Friday, 28th Feb.—Kilburn left for England to read for the bar, in hopes of getting some better appointment on his return than that which he held at Chittagong. The chummery was thus reduced to Maxim and myself.

Being Vice-Chairman of the Municipality, and specially in charge of

communications, I on the 29th called a meeting of the Roads Sub-Committee, which comprised Mr. Fullerton a tea planter, the Head Master of the Government School and a Zemindar, both Hindoos. The planter did not turn up, so the Baboos and I had it all to ourselves. There was much room for improvement in roads and bridges at Chittagong, and it was decided to undertake at once such works as our funds permitted, their execution being entrusted to me. Several petitions from ratepayers were also disposed of, including one from a gentleman who offered to dig a tank at his own expense by the Chowk or Main Bazaar Road. So public-spirited a proposal was of course accepted, it being only stipulated that the side of the tank next the road should be faced with masonry and fenced with a $2\frac{1}{2}$ foot parapet. The digging of tanks and wells for public use is a favourite form of charity among liberal natives of Bengal. In such a climate the provision of a good water-supply is a benefit appreciated by all.

On Sunday March 1st a native brought news of a *sher* (tiger or leopard) close to the station in some low hills behind Fullerton's tea-garden, covered with scrub jungle. Tracks were found—big and little, probably of a tiger and cub,—but men being put in to beat, only a pig was turned out. Afterwards we tied a heifer and sat till dusk at what seemed a likely place, but nothing came. One of my chuprassis named Amgiad said that this tiger had taken a forty-rupee¹ cow of his; and other cattle had been killed. It appeared that one if not two of the brutes must be prowling about in the hills and dense cover of the station. Next day Amgiad came with the news that he had found the carcase of a bullock killed two days back; as it was only half eaten, the *bágh* would probably return. So having knocked off Cutcherry, done the Jail, and arranged with a master-mason for repairs to the racket court which it was at last resolved to have properly done,—I got on “Jack,”² cantered round to “Flora's Path,” and under Amgiad's guidance proceeded to the “kill.” In a dense thicket just above a

¹ Rs. 40 (£4) would not buy much of a cow in England, but it is a good price for a little Bengali animal.

² A pony given me by Harley, Assistant Magistrate of Tippera, who went home sick. It was a cream-coloured little beast, cow-hocked and not much to look at, but a good one to go.

sandy gully between two hills, was the body of a good-sized black bullock, eaten about the hind-quarters, and *very* odoriferous. I was glad to get away to a little distance, and scrambling up the side of the hill opposite that under which the "kill" lay, Amgiad and I sat till after sundown, but saw nothing. So we shouldered our guns and climbed down the hill to the road, which was close by. This was very near the "Tiger Pass," which seemed to be vindicating its claim to the title once more.

On Wednesday the 4th the tiger-alarm was again sounded. Sitting in office about 5 p.m. I received a note from Fullerton asking me to go over at once,—that a tiger had killed a cow and was eating it! Cutcherry adjourned, guns were sent on, and jumping on "Jack" I galloped off to the place indicated,—"Flora's Path" again. On arrival we found that either no one had been placed to mark, or that the marker had taken himself off; anyhow no one was there to point out the "kill," so we were all at sea. Taking an energetic constable I proceeded to explore a neighbouring gully, into which my companion pitched a clod of earth. This was followed by a "hurroosh," that sounded like an animal breaking cover. The policeman swore it was the tiger, and that his head was "*itna burra*" (so big!), holding his hands about a yard apart. I doubt if he really saw anything, but having tiger on the brain allowed his imagination to run away with him. Anyhow, nothing was found, and presently Fullerton came up with his gun and we walked home together. He very civilly suggested that it would be a good plan to sit up at night in his tea-garden, which from tracks lately found seemed a favourite resort of the visitor. The moon was now getting towards the full, so I accepted his offer, and next morning rode over to view the ground, meeting Fullerton by appointment. This was the first tea-garden started in Chittagong, and was called the "Pioneer." The hill-side partially cleared was planted with tea, cinnamon, coffee-bushes and pepper-vines. Some fine trees left standing varied the monotony of the clearing and had a pretty effect. Footprints were plainly traceable across the garden into the uncleared brushwood on the edge: they were not all of the same size, and Fullerton thought there must be a trio—male, female and cub.

Leaving the garden I cantered round to the racket court, and on the way saw a lot of Nuthill's newly caught elephants being brought in

from Kheddah. Fastened by strong ropes to tame elephants, they went along quietly enough. Some little calves, too small to do mischief, were trotting along loose. One of these did something—I forget what—that angered one of the captive females, who charged the offender and rolled him over in the dusty road with loud trumpeting. The wild elephants looked dirty, jaded and miserable: many were very small. Any animal not less than seven feet at the shoulder is up to Commissariat standard, and if otherwise fit is kept for Government service; the smaller ones and those rejected for any special reason being sold off.

Next day (Friday, 6th) I rode over again to Fullerton's garden to make arrangements, and while there saw a barking deer coolly poking about in the jungle just beyond the clearing. That night I sat from about nine o'clock till four when the moon went down, with a kid tied on a small bamboo platform. The wretched animal cried lustily from time to time, but either the *bágh* was not near, or was too cunning to come; so after getting sundry snatches of sleep in more or less uneasy postures I was not sorry to find my night-watch ended, and to get home as day dawned—it was not worth while to go to bed.

Sunday the 8th March dawned bright and cool after a rain squall the evening before. "Kate" was on duty for the morning ride, through "Flora's Path." Just off the grassy bridle-track, that wound among the jungly hills—it must, alas! be spoken of in the past tense, for cultivation and tea-gardens have spoiled its beauty long since—was a pretty little pool fed by a streamlet that made its way under the path and lost itself in the jungle. The margin of the pool was a miniature lawn covered with the finest turf; and in the soft earth by the water's edge were what looked like the fresh prints of a tiger. Mentally noting this I rode home, calling on the way at the *bari* of my chuprassi Amgiad, who reported that a pig and goat had been tied overnight without result. I then had "Jack" saddled and started back for "Flora's Path," taking with me Amgiad and his father-in-law, Munnoo, an experienced old jungle-wallah. Examining the prints, they pronounced them to be quite fresh—last night's, in fact—and said they were made by a *lohapetooa*¹

¹ *Sher* (Persian) or *bágh* (Bengali) is a general term, often loosely used with reference to other animals besides tigers—*e.g.* leopards, &c. But *lohapetooa* in Eastern, and *silodah* in Western Bengal, are local epithets applied only to the striped King of the Jungle.

(tiger). A council of *shikár* was held on the spot : it was resolved to tie a pig and sit there that night, and my followers were left to make the necessary arrangements.

There was a tiffin party at Lord Ulick's in the afternoon, after which I returned home, and as the sun was getting low exchanged my visiting costume for a *khúki* jungle-suit, loaded my rifles, and rode off to "Flora's Path." Munnoo and Amgiad had not been idle, having made a screen of boughs under a small mango tree a few yards from the pool, in which I sat on a cane stool in front at the opening left for shooting, while Munnoo and Amgiad crouched behind, making themselves as small as possible. The legs of our live-bait were tied, and he was fastened with a cord to a peg driven into the ground on the little bit of turf by the pool. "Mum" was now the word, so settling ourselves as comfortably as possible, we prepared to watch. The pig's behaviour was unsatisfactory ; for after being tied up at first, against which he loudly protested, he assumed an attitude of stolid resignation, and lay like a log without uttering a sound, unless punched in the ribs and shaken up, when he gave vent to his feelings in the shrillest soprano. Gradually the sun went down, and twilight began to creep over the sky. Just after sunset, a deer barked on a hill close by, and presently a deep unmistakable guttural "a-a-a-o-o-o-g-h ! a-a-a-o-o-o-g-h ! a-a-a-o-o-o-g-h !" already heard in the Sunderbuns and Tippera Hills, announced that the tiger was rousing for his nightly rounds. The voice came from some hills on the right, across which its owner seemed to be working towards the rear of our position. To stop this, and bring him up our way, I crept out of the surround, and gave the pig a shampooing that made him squeal lustily. This music could scarcely fail to reach the tiger's ears, and should we thought attract him to the ambushade. We sat long and silently, but nothing came. The night sky now began to lighten in the east, and got brighter and brighter till the moon peeping over the hill-tops rose majestically like a silver sixty-four pounder, bathing the gloomy jungle in a flood of radiant light. Dead silence all around : the stillness became almost oppressive ; and in spite of the wild beauty of the scene I began to long for the cheerful light of the domestic lamp and the sound of human voices. But it was too early to go home yet, so I sat on, my eyes closed, in a kind of waking doze. Suddenly



Munnoo who was standing behind gripped my arm, and whispered eagerly : “*Sahib ! Sahib ! soor hai—na bāgh hai ! . . . BĀGH HAI ! ! !*”¹ I opened my eyes and looked * * * * * There was no mirror handy, but doubtless my face expressed horror and astonishment. For there, right in front, at the uncomfortably short distance of some five and twenty paces, looming dusky red in the bright moonlight, stood a Beast, one glance at which was enough to satisfy me that I was at last face to face with an undeniable tiger. The approach was so stealthy and noiseless that none of us seemed to hear anything, though I was not more than half-asleep, while Munnoo and Amgiad were on the watch. It was certainly startling to rouse up from a quiet doze and find such an ugly customer staring at you point blank, for staring he was in our direction, having probably heard Munnoo’s whisper just as he was crawling up to the pig. When I looked up he was standing at gaze, his body half in view, the rest concealed by the bushes round which he was creeping. Perhaps he did not quite make us out ;—the tree overhead cast a very black shadow, the “surround” hid us to some extent, and of course we kept quite still ;—but his cat’s eyes may have enabled him to see something. It was with a very “all overish” sensation that I raised my rifle, by no means confident of making a hit. Firing at a mark in broad daylight is one thing ; aiming at a tiger by moonlight is another. However, I pulled the trigger and let drive. The report was followed by an indignant “WHOOF ! ! !” and with a roar and a bound the tiger was gone. When the smoke cleared, there was nothing to be seen :—two or three plunges in the jungle, and then all was still. Amgiad danced out into the open in a state of furious excitement : “Come along, Sahib,” says he ; “come along, you’ll get another shot here !” but I was not at all disposed to follow his advice.

The question may be asked, how was it that the tiger got off ?—so large an object, at so short a distance, would seem almost like the traditional haystack. A bad miss, it must be confessed ; but under the circumstances it was perhaps just as well that the bullet flew wide, for had the beast been hit and not disabled, the consequences might have been serious. It must also be remembered that shooting by moonlight is shooting under difficulties. With the brightest moon that ever shone

¹ “Sahib ! Sahib ! there’s a pig—or is it a tiger ! . . . It’s THE TIGER ! ! ! !”

(and it was full that night) it is impossible to make out the foresight of a rifle when pointed at a dark object, unless cotton wool is tied on, and then all that is visible is a hazy white mass. Moreover under a tree it was of course darker than out in the open. Add to this, that shooting at a tiger is not quite the same thing as shooting at a bottle, and no better apology can be made for failing to get the beast's scalp, which would have been a trophy indeed.

We left the pig and started back, as it did not seem likely that the visit would be repeated. Little "Xit" was waiting on the road : I lighted a pipe and got home in time for late dinner, where I astonished Maxim by telling him of the adventure.

I have often regretted that I did not revisit the spot the first thing next morning ; but having to hold a local enquiry near a place called Alishahar by the sea, three or four miles from Chittagong, I rode there first. The enquiry did not however come off, as it was further than I had supposed ; and on my way back I met Munnoo, who to my surprise told me that the pig had been taken after all. We went round to the scene of last night's encounter, and there sure enough was the cord broken short off, and no pig. There was no blood, and the only visible sign was a deepish furrow in the turf, close to where the pig had been. This Munnoo said must have been caused by the tiger striking his paw into the ground before seizing the pig. It certainly appeared that the hole might have been made in this way, and there were indications of what looked like claw-marks. Perhaps the cunning brute after the first rush lay hid close by, till hearing by the sound of our voices that we were retreating, when the coast was clear came back and carried off the pig. If so, the tiger certainly did better than his pursuers, who had nothing to show for the night's work, while he at least got his supper of pork.

Anyhow I got another pig, and sat up again that night, declining an invitation to a "Kheddah picnic" given by Nuthill and Holt at Sir William Jones's ruined house in honour of the catch of elephants, and for their inspection by the ladies especially. As it turned out, I might as well have been at the picnic, for my watch was fruitless ; and after sitting till between eight and nine o'clock (it seemed as if the moon would *never* rise) I went home disappointed.

This was my first introduction to a "Royal Bengal." His Majesty did not vouchsafe a second audience, but from signs in the jungle it appeared that he had not left the neighbourhood, and some three weeks later there was another chance. A big bullock was found newly killed and partly eaten in a place close to one of the station roads near "Flora's Path": the carcase was lying in dense jungle at the foot of a hill. I went and sat with Amgiad and Munnoo, but the light was bad; the night being cloudy and the moon only half full. As we were sitting, a *bígdás* (civet cat) twice came out of the jungle just in front of our screen of boughs, quite unconscious of our presence: once he was so close that I could have touched him with my rifle. Suddenly there was a great rustling close by the "kill"; and Munnoo who was standing up declared that he saw the carcase move, as if suddenly and violently tugged from behind; but whatever caused the motion was invisible. A lane had been cleared through the scrub from our screen to the "kill," but beyond were overhanging bushes where it was as dark as a wolf's mouth. We sat till all that could be seen was an indistinct white body, and it was too dark to shoot, when we gave it up and went home. Next morning (1st April) I got up about half past four, took Munnoo and Amgiad with me, and went quietly to the spot. The "kill" was gone, but judging from the tainted air it must have been in the jungle close by. We then went on to the pool by "Flora's Path" where I had fired at the tiger, and found tracks on the brink, apparently fresh. From which it seemed that the beast had not been far off on the previous evening; that he resumed his feast after we left, and having gorged himself, went and drank at the pool. I rode round next morning and found Amgiad and another man making a new screen under the tree by "Flora's Path." A little further on, fragments of the dead bullock were scattered all over the path, probably by jackals. The odour was dreadful, and "Kate" was very frightened. That evening we sat again at the old place, with a pig tied on a small *machán* (platform). Our bait squealed bravely, but in vain. The night became overcast; there was not much moon; and the wind was in the wrong direction (from us towards the pig). After sitting till about eight o'clock we left, and next morning the pig had not been

taken. To make a long story short, I never again saw the tiger as long as I was at Chittagong.

On the 19th March I had to hold a local enquiry down the river, and Kingston the District Superintendent lent me the Police yawl *Foam* for the trip. This boat had belonged to the late Collector, and was fitted up with a little pantry, gun-rack and other conveniences. Government bought her when he went home on furlough, and she had been made over to the Police. She was a sea-going boat, and had once been down as far as Akyab. It was a fine day, hot but breezy, and the *Foam* went along in style. Landing in the jolly boat, I had a long tramp over stretches of sand and sun-baked paddy-fields to the scene of the investigation. In places the ground was covered with white efflorescence, showing how it was impregnated with salt. The sea was a short way off, the land extending to the water's edge in a dead unbroken level: it was difficult to see where one ended and the other began. This is the weak point of Chittagong scenery in the north of the district near the mouth of the Megna. Inland it is hilly and pretty, but between hills and sea the country is quite flat, and there is no beach. Further south towards Arracan the scenery improves; the hills are nearer the sea; there is a nice sandy beach, and the coast is bolder and more picturesque. The enquiry completed, I returned to the yawl; progress up the river was slow, and we did not reach the Sudder Ghát till about 9 P.M.

Just now my time was pretty well occupied, between Cutcherry and "public works," looking after municipal roads, bridges, etc., and repairs to the racket court, of which I was Secretary. The weather was getting hot, but with plenty to do there was less temptation to idle. To take a day at random: *Friday, 27th March*.—Being mail-day I got up a little after four, and having despatched my home-letters went out with the overseer and his sub, measuring for *pucka* (masonry) drains in the bazaar, looking at bridges, etc. Then home for a spell of mild gymnastics, followed by the cool tub, one of the greatest luxuries of an Indian day, and breakfast. Being housekeeper to the chummery, I then checked the servants' account for the mess; after which I went down to the Sudder Ghát and Strand Road (along the river), and thence to Cutcherry. Office over, I looked in at the

Jail which was close by, and then rode down to the racket court. The side-walls of this were built in steps, for convenience of getting to the top; so up I went and examined some new posts being fixed for the nets, besides doing a little amateur whitewashing. Thence back to the Jail and round it with the Commissioner on a visit of inspection. The old jailor—a portly Baboo—was much impressed by our Chief's title, and it was great fun to hear him "My Lord"—ing his visitor continually. Walked back with Lord Ulick to the foot of our hill, and so home to dinner. The above is a fair specimen of daily routine; one day being much like another for people with regular occupations in Bengal as elsewhere.

On the 31st there was a little excitement: the Charitable Dispensary in the bazaar caught fire, and being built of inflammable materials, at this season dry as tinder, was soon demolished, leaving a skeleton of charred posts beams and rafters which speedily collapsed. Young Manton and I turned to as volunteers to help the Police, who act as firemen on these occasions, throwing water on the fire with buckets and such other vessels as were procurable; made ourselves hot and grimy, and half-sick with swallowing a lot of smoke. The building was doomed; but it was something to prevent the fire from spreading in the bazaar.

Nuthill, who had been living with Captain Holt in a snug little house near Tempest Hill, being ordered to Dacca to take charge of the Elephant Depôt, Holt had asked me to take his place in the chummary. So on the 1st of April I moved over. Maxim, having been down with fever, on the 29th March had left for a change to Europe, and Tempest Hill was for the time deserted. My new chum was a pleasant fellow, fond of the jungle, a keen sportsman with rod and rifle, and had seen service in the Mutiny. For the first few weeks we saw little of one another, each having his own occupations—Holt away most of the time, looking after Kheddah work in the Hills, and occasionally visiting headquarters, while I had my daily Cutcherry, varied by inspection of station roads and bridges. I liked amateur engineering, and there was plenty to do at Chittagong. The soil is sandy; the station hilly; many of the roads are steep and bordered by deep ravines; the average yearly rainfall approaches or exceeds

100 inches;¹ so frequent repairs were necessary. In some places protective works in the shape of revetment walls had to be put up to save pieces of road being washed away bodily by heavy rain. Drains too required constant attention, or they got choked with sand and rubbish. Of course it was all surface drainage: we were not bothered with sewers. Funds being limited there was no surplus for expensive luxuries; but something was done, and the main roads at least were kept in decent order.

The following may be mentioned as a specimen of native gossip, which sometimes gets about on very slight provocation. Some light bamboo fences had been put up for me on the parade ground at the Lines, to practise "Kate" at jumping. Whereupon it was rumoured that on a given day I was to stand forth and wrestle against all comers, my vanquisher to receive a liberal *bucksheesh*, variously stated at from Rs. 250 to 500. The fences were perhaps supposed to mark out the arena.

On Tuesday the 21st April Holt turned up from the wilds and proposed a Sunday's excursion to a bungalow in the hills at a place called Bhuttiari, about nine miles north of the station on the Tippera and Dacca Road, which had been bought by the Kheddah Department as a kind of Mofussil depôt for elephants. I had been rather bothered with fever the last day or two, and thought the trip might set me up. So on Saturday (25th) we drove out in the dog-cart, and the road being good made short work of the distance. The bungalow, perched on the western slope of the hills east of the road, was rather dilapidated, but good enough for a picnic visit like ours, and commanded a view of the Bay of Bengal with the island of Sundeeep in front; to the north the Seetakoond Peak towered above the hills, and behind the house to the east the view was bounded by more hills and jungle. Next morning we went out on elephants with a few beaters. The scenery was pretty, little green clearings among the wooded hills, where the villagers raised their crops of paddy, and harvested as much as could be saved from pigs, deer, monkeys and other forest robbers. A common object in these cultivated patches near the hills is the *tíng* or covered platform, raised high on bamboo poles, in which the village scarecrow sits and shouts, or

¹ It is still heavier in the south towards Burma.

works a clapper to drive away these greedy depredators. Our way lay across the hills, and one pass was very picturesque. Trees and creepers overhung the track, obscuring the light, while cliffs rose sheer on either side. Rocky fragments scattered over the path did not improve it as a thoroughfare. Ascent and descent were steep, and the transit would have puzzled an animal less careful and sagacious than an elephant. It was an awkward place; but thanks to a good mahout and docile *hathi* was safely got over. The coolies beat badly: one snipe was flushed, and a jungle-cock heard to crow, but we never fired a shot. The want of luck did not trouble us: we enjoyed the outing as much as anything. In the evening we rode down to the beach on an elephant, taking towels for a bathe; but it was too muddy, so the idea of a swim had to be given up.

This little change sent fever to the right-about, and on our return home I got a telegram from the Secretary, offering the Acting Deputy-Commissionership of Manbhoom, in the Non-Regulation Province of Chota Nagpore. I knew nothing about Manbhoom, except that it was somewhere in the west; but it was promotion, and a Non-Regulation District sounded inviting, so after taking counsel with Holt I accepted the offer.

Next morning we occupied ourselves putting together an elephant-cart which had been sent down by steamer (in pieces) for use in the Kheddah Department. It was a most extensive vehicle, with huge wheels, and must have been ordered as an experiment (unless it was a practical joke), as elephants are not usually put in carts. I never heard whether it was a success.

On Thursday the 30th April Holt and I went to *chota haziri* with the Andersons, when a party was arranged for that afternoon to go to Turtle Tank, Holt supplying elephants for carriage. On arrival, the turtles were called up and fed at the *ghât*. One or two were monstrous fellows, covered with yellowish blotches, possibly from age. They were very tame, swimming close up in a regular shoal, evidently accustomed to this sort of thing. The tank also contained a number of fish, called "*Paris*" (Peris) or fairies by the natives, the turtles being "*Jinns*" or genii. The priests of the shrine were very civil—pleased no doubt at so many Sahibs coming to see their pets.

On the 2nd and 4th of May I inspected some roads and bridges in

the interior for Gadsby. The first trip took me south across the Kurnafuolee along the commencement of a line that had been projected to Arracan, but never properly finished. There was little traffic on this, a nice turfy track, passing numerous tanks, through well-cultivated country. On the second occasion my route lay northward up the Hulda Valley, a river that joins the Kurnafuolee a little above Chittagong; the valley runs about parallel to the Seetakoond Range. This road was meant to connect with Ramgurrh on the Fenny River, between forty and fifty miles from Chittagong; but had not been completed much beyond Futtickcherry Thanah, $25\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Sudder Station. Hathazaree village, also the site of a Thanah, was about half-way to Futtickcherry: the line was crooked in places, but fairly good riding, though there were some groggy wooden bridges requiring delicate treatment. I was received at the Police stations with the usual parade of officers and men in full uniform, who always turn out very smart when an official is expected, and examined some of the registers. From Futtickcherry the picturesque Peak of Seetakoond was full in view to the westward. I got back to the Station with a face the colour of brick-dust after fifty miles of riding and driving in the sun, in time for three games at rackets.

Returning home after my usual morning rounds on the 8th May, I got a note from Gadsby asking me to go out to Koomereeah on the Daeca Road, some twelve miles from the Station, and enquire into the burning down of a tea-house belonging to a planter, under very suspicious circumstances. That evening I started, got caught in a storm, had to walk one stage of about four miles, and reached my destination, the Koomereeah Thanah, about 10 o'clock at night, cold and wet through. In spite of its being the month of May, a fire was very welcome,—in the open, of course, for stoves and fireplaces are not found in Police stations of Eastern Bengal, which are mostly mat structures.

Next morning I went up to the garden, on the lower slopes of the hills east of the road, and saw the planter, an old gentleman named Bryce, formerly in the Police, who had retired from Government service, turned his sword into a pruning-hook, and taken to growing tea. The house burnt down was that in which the raw leaf is manipulated, and there was little doubt that an incendiary had been at work, for the build-



ing was isolated in the jungle, and the fire could hardly have been accidental. Suspicion rested on the people of a neighbouring village, who had no ill-feeling against Bryce himself, but owed his vendor a grudge,—rather an Irish way of paying off a score. But evidence there was none; so the result of my enquiry was not altogether satisfactory. The malicious firing of houses is a common native way of taking revenge, and the crime was especially rife in Chittagong, where the “*bená kánun*”¹ (law of the firebrand) is an expression well understood, as also the threat to “make a man *red*,”—a phrase that recalls “the red cock crowing in the strawyard” in one of Scott’s novels. From the nature of the act, detection is most difficult; and even if the actual incendiary were caught red-handed, his instigator—a worse culprit—might still go unpunished. The obvious course is, to fix responsibility on the *village* to which the crime can be traced; and to this extent it can often be localised. It is perhaps not quite correct in theory, when an offender cannot be found, to make it hot for his neighbours; but it may be safely assumed that the villagers know perfectly well who are the delinquents, so if they withhold information, as accessories after the fact they must take the consequences. In India this rough and ready justice is thoroughly appreciated, and practically meets the requirements of such cases. So on my return to headquarters I reported to the Magistrate, recommending that under a certain section of the Police Act (V. of 1861) a party of special punitive Police should be quartered on the suspected village, which would have to pay the cost of their maintenance. Whether the suggestion was adopted or not, I don’t know.

I got back on Sunday the 10th May, and found myself gazetted to Manbhoom. Lord Ulick called after church and very kindly congratulated me on the step.

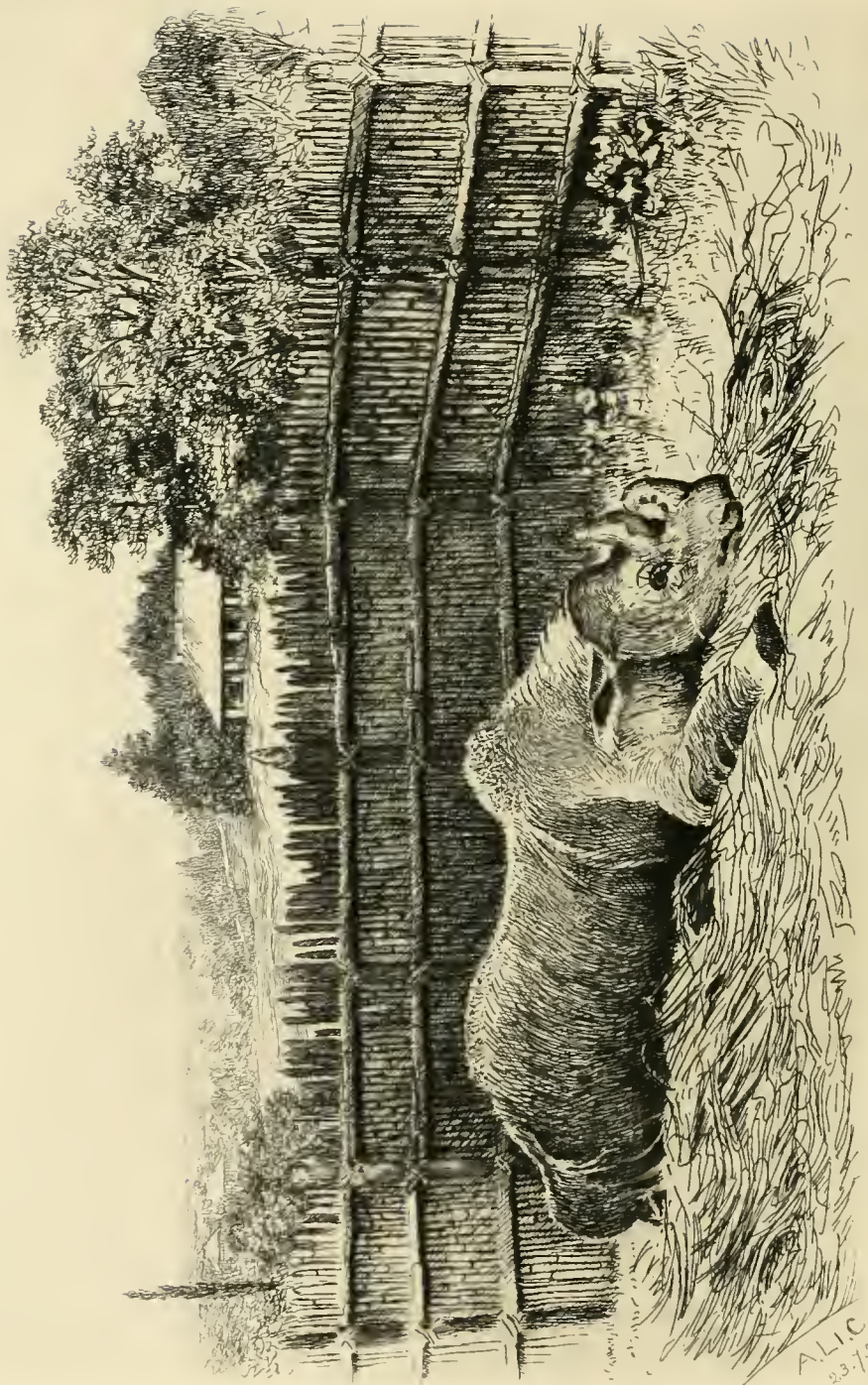
At this time Captain Holt was as usual oscillating between the Station and the Hills, where Kheddah work had to be looked after. Orders now came down from Dacca (Commissariat headquarters) to send the newly-caught elephants to that station, and a European Sergeant arrived by steamer to accompany the draft. The animals were brought down from Chandragona in the Hill Tracts, and camped at a place about three

¹ *Bena* is the article used to start the fire; sometimes a burning dart, shot from a distance into the thatch.

miles beyond Háthazáree, east of the Futtiekcherry Road. It was proposed to go and have a look at them; so on Tuesday the 19th May we turned out about 3 A.M. and started for the camp,—Holt and I on one elephant, the Sergeant on the other. We rode on a *chárjáma*, on which you sit back to back, as on an Irish outside ear, or when riding elephants at the Zoo, which for a long journey is much easier than a howdah. To cross the Hulda there was a canoe resembling Euclid's definition of a line—length without breadth—an uncommonly crank vessel, on which we (not the elephants) wobbled across somehow without an upset.

The wild elephants were picketed about singly, or in twos and threes, fastened by stout jute ropes passing round neck and legs, and secured to trees. Amongst them was one that attracted notice at once, conspicuous in the herd as a thoroughbred in a crowd of cart-horses. Holt called him "Captain," a name worthy of so fine a beast, measuring some 10 feet 6 inches, an unusual height for an Indian elephant. His head was massive and shapely; being a young animal the tusks were not long, but faultless in curve and symmetry; his legs, like columns, well fitted to support the huge body. Altogether he was a grand specimen—the sort of elephant a Rajah or rich native would give almost any money for, he would look so imposing in a procession. His capture had been rather a fluke: he had not been caught in the Kheddah "surround," but was tied up while paying attention to some of the females. He bore his captivity with dignity and resignation, not screaming or struggling like some of the other elephants, but gently swaying his great body to and fro in a lazy manner, and looking out of his little eyes as much as to say: "Well, gentlemen, you've got me tied up; do your worst: if I were only loose, I'd make it lively for some of you!" But his behaviour had not been always so phlegmatic. At Chandragona Scotland of the Police and others were looking at him, when he threw a piece of plantain stem at Scotland and knocked him over. An uncommonly good shot, but rather nasty for the object, the stem of a plantain being no light missile, which hurled by a young monster like "Captain" must have come with the force of a catapult.

After admiring "Captain," we went round and inspected the other elephants, a very inferior lot by comparison. One or two looked ill and miserable, as if at the point of death. Elephants are delicate animals,



and when newly caught require most careful treatment. Generally some of them die, and the percentage of loss is sometimes very high.

Next morning (20th May) I found that a poor little monkey called "John," left with me by Maxim when he went home, had been carried off during the night, probably by a wild-cat or jackal, the only traces being the string that had been round his neck, all bloody, and drops of blood here and there. Holt had another monkey; also a young bear; and these two were great chums. They would seize and hug each other and roll about the verandah, making believe to bite. The young bear was a comical little beast: when he saw any one he knew he would get up on his hind legs, stagger towards him, and embracing his leg, begin playfully biting it. The sweeper used to feed him with bread and milk, when Ursa Minor would get his paw into the bowl; and if the sweeper objected, he grumbled and swore like a trooper. Sometimes he was let loose, and went careering about the compound with a long string to his neck. My own monkey (bigger and stronger than Holt's) watching her opportunity would get hold of this string, and when Master Bruin was at the full jump would give a sly tug and bring him up with a round turn that sent him sprawling on his back, loudly protesting. But "Joeke" never pursued her advantage: she would let go the string and gaze abroad, contemplating the landscape and pensively scratching, as if there were no such animal in existence as the bear; while the latter no doubt wondered what could have upset him so suddenly.

Besides the bear and the monkey, Holt possessed another animal, rather large for a pet, in the shape of a rhinoceros, which had been found stuck in a quicksand somewhere in the south of the district by one of the Kheddah parties, and secured and brought in with the help of elephants. "Begum" lived in a stockaded enclosure on our hill containing a bath or rather mud-hole in which it was her delight to wallow. She was different from the Indian rhino which has a single horn, being a specimen of the Malayan or two-horned variety. After a time she got very tame and quiet, but never could endure the sight of an elephant, which perhaps reminded her of her capture. She was afterwards bought by Jamrach the great beast collector, sent to England, and eventually found a home in the Zoo at Regent's Park, where she was labelled the "Hairy-eared Rhinoceros."

The frequency of sudden death in India was just now sadly exemplified in the case of Rossall, our Additional Judge, who returning from his usual walk on Friday the 22nd May complained of feeling drowsy. He lay down and fell into a stupor from which he never woke, dying apparently without pain on the following afternoon. It was a case of sunstroke: the weather being hot there could be no delay about the funeral, so after giving orders for a coffin I went down to the Cemetery with young Manton and superintended the digging of a grave by a gang of prisoners, who were usually employed as sextons. Poor Rossall was buried on Sunday morning, Lord Ulick reading the service in the chaplain's absence. This event cast quite a gloom over the station: the deceased was much liked, and did good, especially among the natives, in a quiet unobtrusive way.

My days at Chittagong were now numbered, and preparations for departure nearly complete. My stud was scattered to the winds, as it was too far to take horses to Manbhoom: "Dick" and little "Xit," companions of my wanderings thus far, were both given to Lyon at Dacca, on condition that they should not again be parted with. "Kate" was bought by the Assistant Magistrate at Comilla, and "Jack," the little rat of a pony left me by Harley, I made over as a parting bequest to Manton.

On the 1st June (Whit Monday), the *Moulmein* arrived with my successor. This ship had brought me to Chittagong in 1863, and had been running on the same line ever since, like the *Flying Dutchman*. On the 3rd I paid my farewell visits, and had a last game in the old racket court, which I had the satisfaction of leaving in a better state of repair than I had found on arrival; and on the 4th the inexorable *Flying Dutchman* returned from Akyab, to bear me away to new scenes in the West. Officials in India are ever locomotive, especially juniors, who having as a rule no family encumbrances are expected to "mobilise" at short notice. And a very good thing is this moving about for the said juniors, increasing their experience and enlarging their ideas. I at least could welcome a transfer on promotion to a district, a delightful appointment, with greater responsibilities, higher pay, and comparative independence, which is not the lot of a Joint Magistrate at a Sudder Station. For all that, last hours are never very cheerful, and there was much that I was sorry to leave

Final agonies at length got through, I found myself with bag and baggage and one servant on the deck of the old *Moulmein*, bound for Calcutta. It was a fine afternoon, and outside the bar the only motion was that caused by a slight ground swell. Something being wrong in the engine-room, the vessel had to stop for about an hour ; and this delay gave time to take a parting look at the beautiful Seetakoond Hills, now turning purple and violet in the sunset, and to waft across the darkening sea a regretful

FAREWELL TO CHITTAGONG.

Adieu, adieu, my Chittagong
 Fades in the gloom afar ;
 The *tindal*¹ whistles loud and long,
 And howls the gay *lascár*.

The sea gets up, the zephyrs blow,—
 The waves are crested white ;
 And really I must go below :—
 My Chittagong, good night !

¹ Native bo'sun's mate.

CHAPTER X

PURULIA (MANBHOOM). FIRST VISIT. 1868—9

EARLY on Saturday 6th June the *Moulmein* anchored in Saugor Roads. The morning was dull and cheerless, mist and rain obscuring the view, but a strong flood tide bore us nobly up the Hooghly, and we reached our moorings early in the afternoon.

Few places are seen to advantage in heavy rain; and my first visit to Calcutta, after nearly five years' absence in the Mofussil, was not favoured by the weather, which was something more than wet. It seemed as if the heavens had opened and were pouring forth an inexhaustible supply of moisture. Matters were not made more cheerful by sundry bouts of fever, but I managed to make my calls of duty on the Lieut.-Governor and at the Secretariat. One of the shivering fits came on while I was paying my respects at Belvedere; and on returning to the Club I found a note from the Private Secretary, asking me to stay there while in Calcutta. This was very kind and thoughtful of Mr. Grey, to whom, except for having met him the previous year at Dacca, I was an entire stranger; and the change to an upstairs bed-room and the airy surroundings of Belvedere did good, for the fever passed off.

A visit to Calcutta not being of every-day occurrence, a good deal of shopping had to be got through, and calls made on old acquaintances, among these Fergus G. and Mangles, the former being now A.D.C. to the General Commanding at the Presidency, and the latter officiating Secretary to the Board of Revenue, or as the natives call it the "Salty Board,"—the tax on salt being not the least important of the Government sources of revenue. Having disposed of my stud too, I had to get a remount; and shortly became the owner of a great fiddle-headed Waler

with legs like a cart-horse, which not being ornamental it was to be hoped would prove useful.

From the almost incessant rain Calcutta was in such a state of slush and mud that I was glad to get away ; and on Saturday the 13th June left Howrah¹ for Burrakur, the nearest point on the railway to my destination. This place, on a river of the same name, was then the end of the East Indian Railway in that direction, being the terminal station of a branch line from Raneegunge, about thirty miles to the north-west. This is the Black Country of Bengal, and collieries abound. The roads are black with coal-dust when it is dry, and coal-mud when it is wet ; numerous shafts rising like sooty columns belch forth dense clouds of smoke that obscure the atmosphere by day, while the night sky is reddened by the glare of many furnaces. Here as elsewhere in busy centres of industry poor Nature is grievously defaced by man's handiwork. The ground is torn up in all directions : the few trees look ragged and forlorn : agriculture is not exactly displaced by mining ; but the green paddy fields contrast strangely with gloomy pits and caverns where gangs of grimy natives with pick and shovel are digging and delving and ever adding to the great heaps of coal piled up at their mouth. The workings at Raneegunge are not deep : compared with English collieries many of those in Bengal would seem little more than surface-trenching.

Burrakur was the headquarters of an Executive Engineer, in charge of the Burrakur Bridge Works and a Division of the Grand Trunk Road. The engineer Ducas received me hospitably, and was good enough to arrange my palkee dāk to Purulia, forty-six miles distant. His Assistant, a young fellow named Joll, was living with him. Ducas's bungalow, built on high ground overlooking the river and bridge, was full of ingenious little conveniences devised by the occupant, who was evidently a mechanical genius. He was also a bird and beast fancier, and kept a number of pets—tame deer, monkeys, pea-fowl, pigeons, &c.

The Burrakur Bridge was then one of the engineering' notorieties of the Grand Trunk Road ; and had been in progress for a very long time. One of the piers had settled askew in the sandy river-bed ; and to get this straight was the first task of the engineer in charge. It was difficult

¹ A suburb of Calcutta across the Hooghly, and terminus of the East Indian Railway.

work, and slow : but of course nothing could be done towards completing the superstructure till piers and foundations had been made thoroughly safe. When finished, a year or two later, this bridge was chiefly used by coal carts coming to the railway from the other side of the river, most of the through traffic having by that time been diverted from the road to the railway ; meantime there was a ferry.

After Eastern Bengal, the Manbhoom country looked bleak and stony. Instead of villages buried in luxuriant vegetation among broad level stretches of rice-fields, here were rolling uplands, with clumps of mango and other trees scattered about, clusters of mud huts at intervals marking the centres of population, while the view was varied by rocky hills, conspicuous landmarks rising singly or in groups like islands from the undulating plain. There were rice-fields too, but mostly in the hollows between the ridges,—the higher ground being too dry and stony for this water-loving crop. The Purulia Road crosses the Damooda a mile or two from Burrakur, just below the junction of the two rivers. This is the largest river in that region, but not navigable. Unlike the deep tidal channels of Dacca and Chittagong running between mud-banks, the Damooda here flows over a broad sandy bed, with reefs of rock appearing at intervals. In this part of Bengal the rivers are rushing torrents after heavy rain,—pools connected by shallow streams in the dry weather. Many of the smaller water-courses dry up entirely. The villages along the road were very different from those of the east country. No mat-walls or bamboo fences, the huts having walls of sun-dried mud, and the fields where enclosed at all, generally near the villages, being similarly surrounded. In respect of dirt, untidiness, and a general absence of conservancy arrangements, they were pretty much on a par with native villages elsewhere. The main-street served also as the main-drain, and after heavy rain would become a regular water-course, which by giving the place a good wash-out was probably beneficial. The novelty of the landscape would have been pleasing, if seen in bright weather ; but during the whole tedious palkee journey rain fell almost incessantly, and first impressions were rather damp and gloomy.

On reaching Purulia I went to the house of the District Superintendent of Police, Frederick Wilcox, who not content with the liberal supply of water from the skies, had gone to bathe in the Lake, whereof

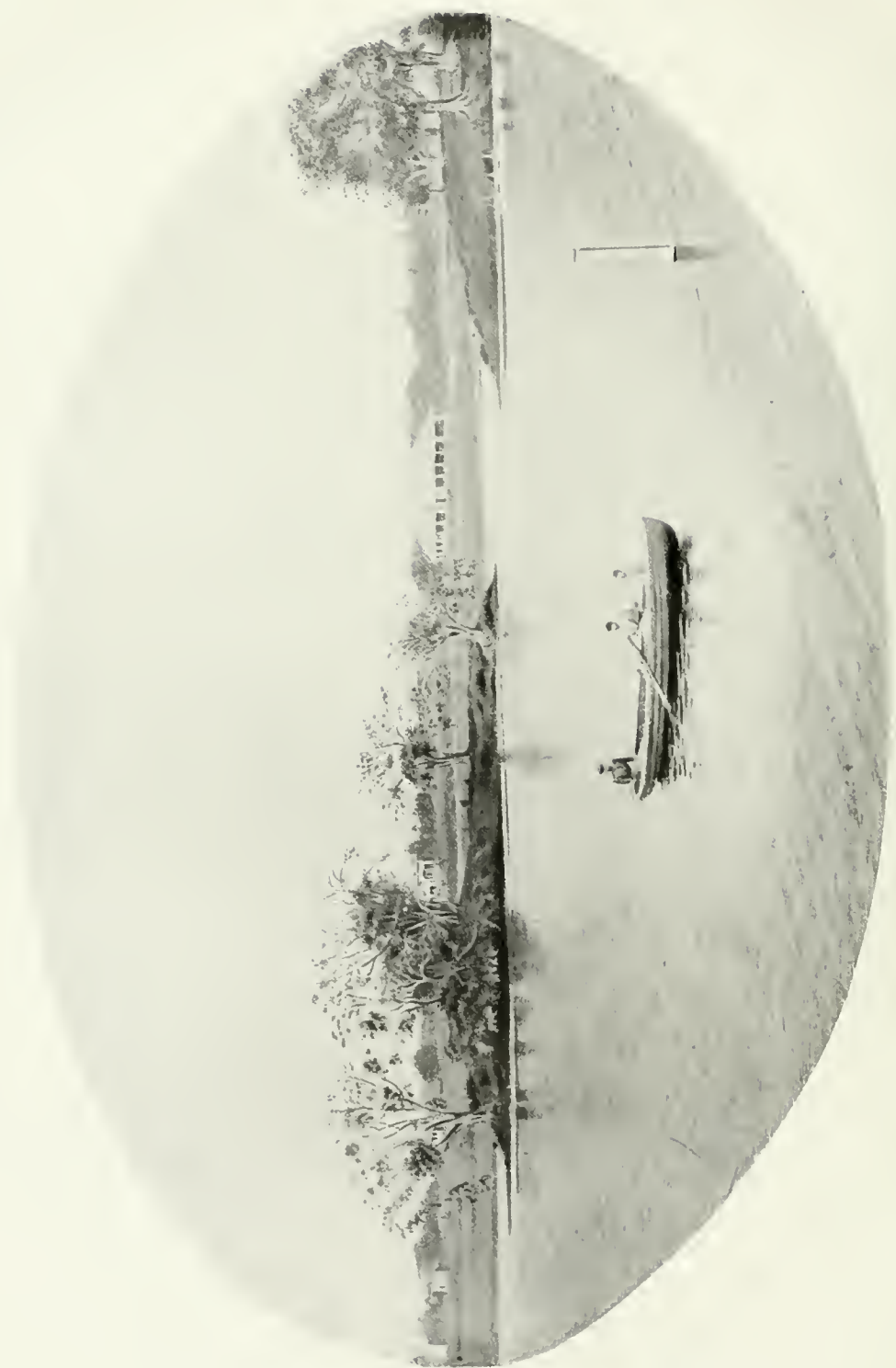
more anon. Presently he came in, accompanied by a young fellow named Garbett, who turned out to be identical with a small boy in a short jacket, son of the chaplain at Barraekpore, who used to play hockey on a pony with the Barraekpore club in 1863. He had now arrived at years of discretion, and was cherishing his whiskers.

Next day (June 16th) I took charge from Captain Money, transferred as Deputy Commissioner to Ranchi, in the adjoining district of Lohardugga. He left some useful notes on District matters, and in the course of conversation showed himself acquainted not only with the character and condition of the people generally, but also with the private affairs and family intrigues of the zemindars and other leading natives. Evidently the District Officer's personality was a more important factor in the administration, and exercised greater influence here than in the Regulation Provinces.

A few particulars regarding our new surroundings may here be noted. Chota Nagpore is in Western Bengal, on the eastern slope of the Central Indian plateau, where the land falls away to the alluvial valley of the Ganges. Its boundaries are: north, the Patna and Bhaugulpore Divisions; east, Burdwan; west, Rewa and the Central Provinces; and Orissa in the south. The country is higher, and the climate drier and healthier than in Central and Eastern Bengal. The details of administration are somewhat different from those in the Regulation Provinces. The terms Regulation and Non-Regulation are no longer so appropriate as in the days of the old Regulations, many of which did not apply to these exceptionally governed tracts. Of late years much has been done in the way of codifying the laws in India, and the Penal Code, the Codes of Civil and Criminal Procedure, and other statutes of general application are now in force throughout all Provinces alike. But a distinction is still maintained, and appears both in the official titles of Government officers, and in their powers and functions. The Commissioner of Chota Nagpore is also Governor General's Agent on the South-west Frontier, an addition that recalls the time when Chota Nagpore *was* on the frontier of Bengal, before the British authority extended over the Central Provinces. He is chief executive officer over the four districts of Lohardugga (Sudder Station Ranchi); Hazáribágh (Hazaribágh); Manbhoom (Purulia); and Singh-

bloom (Chyebassa) ; and as Governor General's Agent exercises supervision over Jushpore, Sirgoojah and other territories, forming a cluster of semi-independent states to the westward. In these states he also has powers of a Sessions Judge, but when (as in the case of capital offences) his orders require confirmation, they go to the Lieut.-Governor, not the High Court. His headquarters are at Ranchi, where is also stationed the Judicial Commissioner, next in rank to the Commissioner, with powers similar to those of a Civil and Sessions Judge in the Regulation Provinces, but with jurisdiction extending over all four districts above mentioned. In Chota Nagpore a District Officer is called Deputy Commissioner, and has more varied and extensive powers than a Magistrate and Collector. In his magisterial capacity he can hear and decide all cases triable by the Court of Session except those punishable with death, and can imprison up to seven years (the longest term that a Magistrate can give is two). He has the Revenue powers of a Collector, and further exercises those of a Subordinate (Civil) Judge, hearing original suits valued up to Rs. 5000 and appeals from Moonsiffs, the lowest grade of civil judges. One object of giving special powers to Deputy Commissioners is to lighten the work of the Judicial Commissioner, who with so large a jurisdiction might otherwise have too much to do. The District Officer's principal subordinate, instead of Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector, is called Senior Assistant Commissioner, and officers of lower grade are plain Assistant or (if belonging to the Uncovenanted Service) Extra Assistant Commissioners. Appointments in the Non-Regulation Commission may be held by military men, belonging to the Staff Corps, who to all intents and purposes have become civilians. They retain army rank however, their promotion goes on by seniority, and they are liable to be sent back to military duty, but this is seldom done. There have been changes of late years, and even in my time subordinate posts were filled by Deputy Magistrate-Collectors as in the Regulation Provinces. There are fewer military civilians, and Extra Assistant Commissioners have almost disappeared from the Service list. But the Non-Regulation Commission still exists as a distinct body, though most of the higher appointments are now held by civilians.

The Districts of Chota Nagpore are large in area, but not thickly populated, the country being less fertile than the rich valleys of the



Ganges and Brahmaputra, and not fitted to support so many inhabitants. Manbhoom then comprised some 5,000 or 6,000 square miles,¹ with a population roughly estimated at half a million to six hundred thousand. This was before the regular census taken in 1871–2.

Purulia stands high, on a ridge of open country a little north of the Cossye River, towards which the land falls away in a series of *tâurs* (local name) or uplands, broken by paddy cultivation, ravines and water-courses. The station was formerly at Manbazar, some twenty or thirty miles to the south-east, which seems to have given the district its name of Manbhoom;² but moved to Purulia as a healthier spot many years before. In 1868 it was a place of no great importance,³ comprising a small native bazar, with European quarter at a little distance. Here were the bungalows of the principal officials, the public offices, a Circuit-house (formerly residence of the Deputy Commissioner), and buildings belonging to a branch of the Lutheran Mission established at Ranchi. The great feature of Purulia was the Lake, with a broad embankment shaded by a fine avenue of trees. In this part of Bengal artificial pieces of water are called *bândhs* (from the native word *bândhna* to confine),—reservoirs being formed by running dykes across valleys or depressions in the surface of the country and heading up the water. In this way, with a well-chosen site, very large quantities of water may be retained for irrigation and other purposes; and the *Sâhib Bândh*, as the Purulia Lake is called, is a case in point, being one of the finest in the District. It covers an area of many acres, and has two islands planted with trees, which add greatly to its picturesque beauty. This lake was excavated and embanked in the time of a former Deputy Commissioner (or Assistant to the Governor General's Agent as he used to be called), in the days when railroads and telegraphs were not, and District Officers ruled like little kings in their dominions. Tradition tells how the said Deputy Commissioner directed that no person coming to him with a petition should be heard until he had done a day's work on the *Sâhib Bândh*.

¹ The boundaries were altered afterwards.

² The termination *bhoom*, common in Western Bengal, is from the Sanskrit *bhumi* (humus?), meaning "earth." *Man-bhoom* is the Land of Men; *Singh-bhoom* the Land of Lions; *Beer-bhoom* (in the Burdwan Division, N.E. of Manbhoom), the Land of Heroes, &c.

³ Purulia is now a station on the Bengal-Nagpore Railway.

Whatever may be thought of the legality of such an order, there can be no two opinions as to the public utility of the work thus constructed; and the official's action, though doubtless *zubberdust* (arbitrary) according to Western notions, was quite in harmony with the native idea of right and proper conduct on the part of a beneficent ruler. The water of the lake is clear and limpid, and famous for its good quality not only among Europeans but natives also, who being mostly water-drinkers are good judges.

On the 19th July Devéria and I took the field with his "bobbery pack," and killed a fox. D. was agent to a contractor whose business it was to supply sleepers to the East Indian Railway. In Chota Nagpore there are large forests of *sál* trees,—a timber well suited to railway purposes,—belonging to local zemindars or Rajahs as they call themselves, a shiftless class of impecunious spendthrifts, deeply indebted to the money-lenders, and always ready to "do a bit of paper." People coming with ready money could almost make their own terms; and thus it happened that vast areas of forest were made over to men like Devéria's principal, who cut down the best trees and sent them off to the railway. The logs were roughly dressed to the proper size, put on bullock or buffalo carts called *suggurs*—primitive vehicles with solid wheels—and so dragged long distances to Raneegunge. As the forests nearer the line got worked out, the wood-cutters had to go further and further afield, and sleepers became dearer. But cheap or dear, the railway's insatiable demands must be supplied, and so the destruction went on over ever-widening tracts, which were gradually stripped of their finest timber. Meantime the contractors drove a roaring trade, and our little society at Purulia benefited by the presence of M. Hippolyte Devéria, a Frenchman by extraction, but born and bred in India,—a bold rider, straight shot, and keen sportsman.

This gentleman had a great collection of dogs, comprising big Australian kangaroo hounds (very like Scotch deerhounds) and little black and tan terriers, sharp as weasels and plucky as bantams. The bobbery pack was almost too good as regards pace: the "jacks" about Purulia had never a chance with the long stride of the flying kangaroo-dogs who did the running and seizing, while the shorter-legged members of the pack came yapping up behind and each got hold some-

where when the quarry was pulled down. One cannot have much pity for the sneaking, howling, carrion-devouring jackals; but the Indian fox is a dainty little animal, silver-grey, with a splendid brush tipped with black; and one feels almost glad to see Reynard baffle the whole pack as he does sometimes with his sharp twists and turns, and get safely to earth. On the present occasion this actually happened; but the ruthless Devéria was one too many for the chase, and sending some of the little terriers into the hole at one end he drove the fox into a corner just under another opening, and pulled him out by the tail, when he was very soon disposed of. The riding about Purulia was rough. The high barren uplands were fairly good, though there were plenty of loose stones, and sheet-rock cropping out here and there, necessitating careful steering; but where the ground fell away into hollows terraced for rice-cultivation, it was rather like riding up or down stairs. There were also yawning gullies with rotten banks, and treacherous white-ant workings that would let a horse's foot through on ground that looked perfectly safe.

About noon on Friday the 31st July an earthquake was felt at Purulia with a rumbling noise, as of a loaded waggon passing over an ill-paved street, verandah pillars quivering visibly with the vibration of the earth. From letters to the Calcutta *Englishman* it appeared that the movement had been felt over a large extent of country. Scarcely any two correspondents agreed as to the direction of the earthquake. Even at Purulia, opinions were divided on this point; but no great harm was done, which was the chief thing.

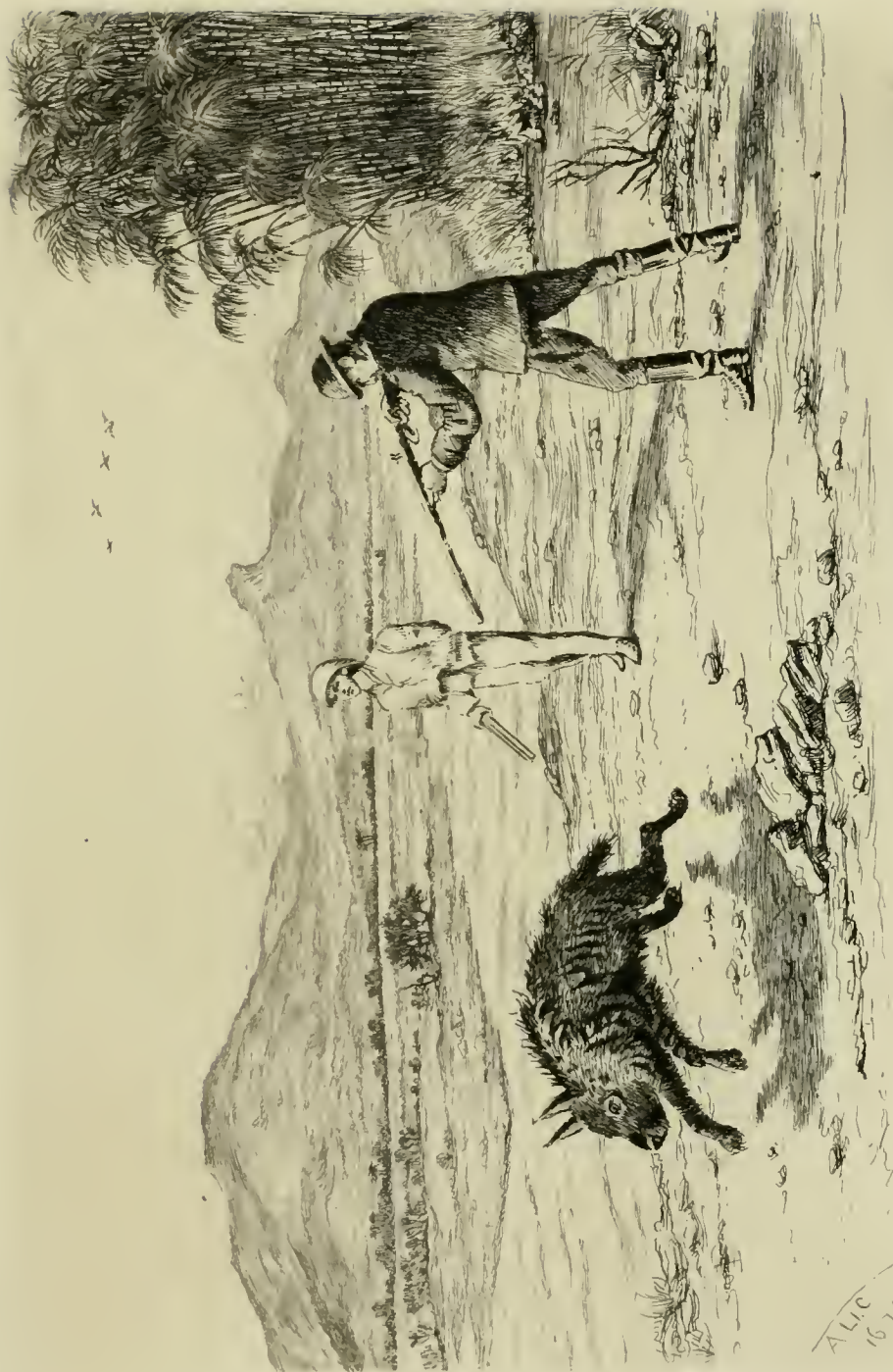
A District Officer has to be more locomotive than a Joint Magistrate, and wanting a second horse I wrote to Simson, my old Commissioner at Dacca, and bought from him a Waler which I named "Charlie"—a handsome well-bred animal with high spirit, good mouth and a lovely temper. He soon became a favourite in our little society, which being mostly bachelor concerned itself a good deal about the stable.

On the 14th September I was doing early Cutcherry when an excited native came and said there was a *bágh* in a *bári*. A *bágh* might be anything from a wild cat to a tiger; a *bári* means a homestead, but the term is also applied to cultivation on high or homestead land;—in this case it was a plantation of sugar-cane. The place was not above a

mile off, so going home I picked up Campbell, a young fellow in the Police then staying with me, and we started together. Men were put into the sugar-cane, while we waited "outside : presently out bolted a hyæna, and galloped off in the lumbering style of these animals. Each of us fired but missed, and then proceeded to run after the beast, with the beaters all yelling in chorus. After pounding through several paddy fields, deep in mud and water, without appearing to gain an inch on the chase, we desisted, and firing a parting shot at the fugitive, left the natives to follow up with their bows and arrows if so disposed. Later in the day a hyæna was brought in for the Government reward (Rs. 5), having been clubbed to death by some villagers. If this was the same that had led us such a dance in the morning, it escaped our bullets only to meet a less respectable end.

Rewards for killing wild beasts were high in Chota Nagpore compared with Dacca and Chittagong. Tigers, worth Rs. 5 or 10 in Eastern Bengal, fetched Rs. 30 in Manbhoom, on account of their man-eating propensities. Leopards, destructive to cattle, were priced at Rs. 10, and bears at the same figure. These last live mostly on vegetables, honey and white ants ; and as a rule do not attack human beings unless molested, or in the case of a female with cubs, when they are very fierce, and inflict terrible wounds with teeth and claws, the latter especially formidable weapons. Wolves carry off children and are valued at Rs. 20. Hyænas attack small animals, as goats and sheep, but are not dangerous to men.

The Orissa famine had been felt in Chota Nagpore, and relief works started in several places, amongst others the Burrabhoom Pergunnah, an extensive hilly and jungly tract in the south of the district. These works, never finished, had fallen into disrepair since relief operations had terminated, and the Doorga Pooja holidays commencing on the 20th September afforded an opportunity for inspection. Tent and traps sent on, Devéria and I started early on the 24th for Burrabazar, about twenty-six miles south of Purulia, principal place in the Pergunnah, and site of a Police Thanah. Three rivers had to be crossed on the way : the Cossye which came first, three miles from Purulia, was "down," that is, a flood was just subsiding. In the dry weather rivers in Manbhoom are easily fordable (though some are troublesome from quicksands), but during the



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rains they are often in flood, and sometimes impassable for hours. The horses were unsaddled and led across : the water being high and the current strong they were nearly taken off their feet once or twice ; but got safely over, and after a rub down were quite fit for service. We and the saddles crossed in a boat. The other two streams were smaller, and easily managed.

The country traversed was undulating and park-like, varied with belts of low jungle on the uplands, and green rice-fields in the hollows,—in the background a dark line of wooded hills, here and there rising into rugged peaks and bold rocky bluffs. There is a good deal of upland produce in Chota Nagpore, as pulses, oil-seeds, sugar-cane, Indian corn, &c. ; but in Manbhoom rice is still the principal crop : further west, as the level of the country rises, less rice is grown, and more of other staples. Paddy cultivation here is different from that of Eastern Bengal. There, rice-lands are mostly dead-level,—even in Chittagong there is little rising ground till the hills are reached,—and these flats are more or less under water for about five months of the year. In Chota Nagpore on the other hand the country is never inundated : the higher portions are always dry ; and moisture is retained by terracing the slopes and making each field a separate kind of tray or basin, surrounded on all sides by ridges or small dykes called *ails*, which serve as boundaries and prevent the escape of water. Any superabundance is easily dealt with by cutting nicks in the borders of the higher terraces, when the water runs down into the fields below. Drainage is a simple matter in Manbhoom, a district of which it has been said, almost without exaggeration, that it contains no level ground. The surface is everywhere undulating, and water rushes off as it falls. The object to be kept in view here, is to prevent its all running to waste and retain sufficient for irrigation, for which purpose storage reservoirs or *bándhs* are invaluable, and might be usefully multiplied to almost any extent.

Burrabazar had been the headquarters of the officer in charge of relief works, chiefly on roads, the principal one being projected from Burrabazar to Koilapál, near the Midnapore boundary. This might have become a useful line if completed between Purulia and Midnapore, and even if extended to Purulia only it would have been valuable as a District road. But when the pinch of famine was no longer felt, the relief centres were

closed, works stopped, and there was now nothing to show for all the money spent but stretches of unfinished embankment, fast relapsing into jungle, a few timber and bamboo bridges falling to pieces, and many unbridged gaps. At Bangoorda, a few miles south of Burrabazar, the road embankment had been made to serve as a retaining dyke for a large *bándh*; but owing to faulty design, bad work or both, the earthwork had given way and the water escaped through a huge breach. Inspection of these works was disheartening, monuments as they seemed to be of money wasted; and the pretext of famine being now removed, there was small chance of getting the funds needed to repair damages and complete works that in their present state were almost useless.

The weather at Burrabazar was unsettled and rainy, and when the rain left off, we had to wait till the tent was dry enough to pack and carry. On the 30th September camp moved to Sooklára, half way to Purulia. The first river, close to Burrabazar, was crossed without difficulty; but the next was high. I was riding "Garibaldi," a steady old nag of Devéria's, Cabul or Gulf Arab, when suddenly he got into a hole or quicksand, and we rolled together in the water. The tent was up at Sooklára, but all the traps had not arrived, and no change of clothes being available, an all-over wrap was contrived with a long strip of muslin, such as natives use for turbans, which was better than a wet riding suit. Fortunately the provisions had turned up, for we were hungry as hunters; and this was one of the few occasions on which I remember to have felt *ravenous* in India: intense thirst is a much more common sensation. On the 2nd October the march continued to Salaidohur, a small village close to a well-wooded range of hills. Written orders had been sent on to collect beaters for a *húnk* or drive, as there was a good deal of cover. Arrived at the village, Devéria consulted with an old ally of his, the village barber, who united a taste for sport with his professional pursuits. The tent coming up late, it was decided to postpone the beat till next day, and go up to the hills very early in the morning on the chance of catching bears on their return from feeding in the jungles and fields below. So next morning we rose at about three o'clock, and after a refreshing cup of tea set forth under the Barber's guidance. Devéria posted himself in a likely spot some way up the hill, while I was put in charge of the old gentleman, who stuck me in the middle of a very open

path, and remarked cheerfully that it was a she-bear with cubs, and *they would not run away!* This was inspiring: to add to the enjoyment of the moment it was still dark, and a drizzling rain began to fall. Nothing showed itself after all: it was tedious work looking down the gloomy jungle-path, and the first peep of dawn was very welcome. When it was broad daylight we left our station and made for camp, falling in with Devéria on the way. He had heard bears near him, and found tracks, but seen nothing. After breakfast the *hánk* came off, but the result was *nil*, and we got a thorough drenching from the rain on our way home. The night was black as Erebus, with thunder, lightning and wind, and the tent-ropes had to be tightened for fear of accidents.

After the storm the weather cleared, and next morning was bright and beautiful, clouds of silvery mist rolling along the hill-sides. In the afternoon we went for a prowl on the hills, and coming to some holes in the rock, Devéria sent his Goorkha servant, Jungbeer, to explore them. He was poking about at the bottom of a rocky gully, while we were above, when Devéria found an opening that seemed to communicate with the lower regions. Into this he pitched a small stone, and then a good-sized boulder, which went rolling down with a great clatter, starting a bear that was probably enjoying a snooze in this cool retreat. Out bolted Bruin with a rush, and scuttled full tilt down the gully. Master Jungbeer had to lay hold of a creeper and slew his legs aloft pretty sharp, for the bear was in a hurry. The jungle was so dense that I saw nothing of the beast, though standing on a piece of rock only a yard or two above Jungbeer when the bear broke. After this Devéria had a shot at a hyæna, and we saw a hare, but got nothing. Next day (5th October) we returned to Purulia, and so ended the Doorga Pooja holidays. On the 16th Devéria, young Garbett and I made another trip to Salaidohur: a bear was turned out, and G. got two shots, one of which was thought to have hit, but did not stop him. I ran up just in time to see the brute cantering off—the first wild bear I had set eyes on.

About this time my big Waler "John" began to show signs of "going in the loins" (paralysis of the hind-quarters), called *kamree* by the natives, no uncommon complaint in Lower Bengal, for which no cure has yet been discovered. Horses suffering in this way begin by dragging one or both of the hind-feet, and it is a bad sign if the

toes are worn away. Sometimes a horse may be slightly affected, and though useless for saddle may be driven: but often the disease gains ground rapidly, and all power in the loins is lost. In such cases the animal has to be destroyed.

Inoculation for small-pox was of old the practice in India, but Government had now prohibited this, and determined to substitute vaccination. From such conservative people as the natives strong opposition was to be expected, and the prejudices of Hindoos were not lessened by the knowledge that vaccine lymph is obtained from their sacred animal the cow. Inoculation was performed by the "Tikaits," a class of inferior Brahmans, whose office was hereditary, and the operation was regarded as a religious rite. (There is a goddess of small-pox in the Hindu Pantheon.) My predecessor Captain Money had tried to enlist these Tikaits as vaccinators under the new system,—obviously the best way to overcome native dislike to the change,—and with some success; but watchfulness was necessary, to prevent their continuing the old practice while pretending to have adopted the new. There was a special Vaccination Department under a Superintendent, with a staff of trained vaccinators who travelled about during the cold weather, the best season for vaccination. It was the duty of Civil Surgeons to cooperate with this Department and do their best to push the new treatment, while District Officers were expected to use their influence in the same direction. On the 10th November our *medico*, Dr. Wilson, having previously notified his intention, went into the bazar at Purulia to vaccinate all comers, and I accompanied him to give official countenance to the proceeding. One or two small patients were operated on, but the people were very backward, and seemed to think they were doing us a favour in allowing their children to be vaccinated.

The prejudice against vaccination did not extend to European medical treatment and medicines procurable at the Charitable Dispensary, to which the natives resorted freely, much appreciating the gratuitous nature of the services rendered. Dispensaries are established at all District and Subdivisional stations, and other places where medical aid is specially needed, or where a hospital may be supported by private munificence. They are maintained by voluntary contributions or local

rates, or both, while Government helps in the way of supervision and otherwise. The hospital at Purulia having been commenced on a grand and far too costly scale, all the money was spent before the building was finished, and in this condition it was handed over to me. On the 11th November a meeting was held for the collection of funds to complete the building. Getting money from natives for any public purpose is often like drawing double teeth; but on this occasion the results were not so bad. The leading landholder was the Raja of Pachete, owner of a great estate covering part of Manbhoom and the adjoining districts of Burdwan and Bancoora. His agent who attended the meeting was induced to promise a good round sum on his master's behalf, and this example was not without its effect upon the others.

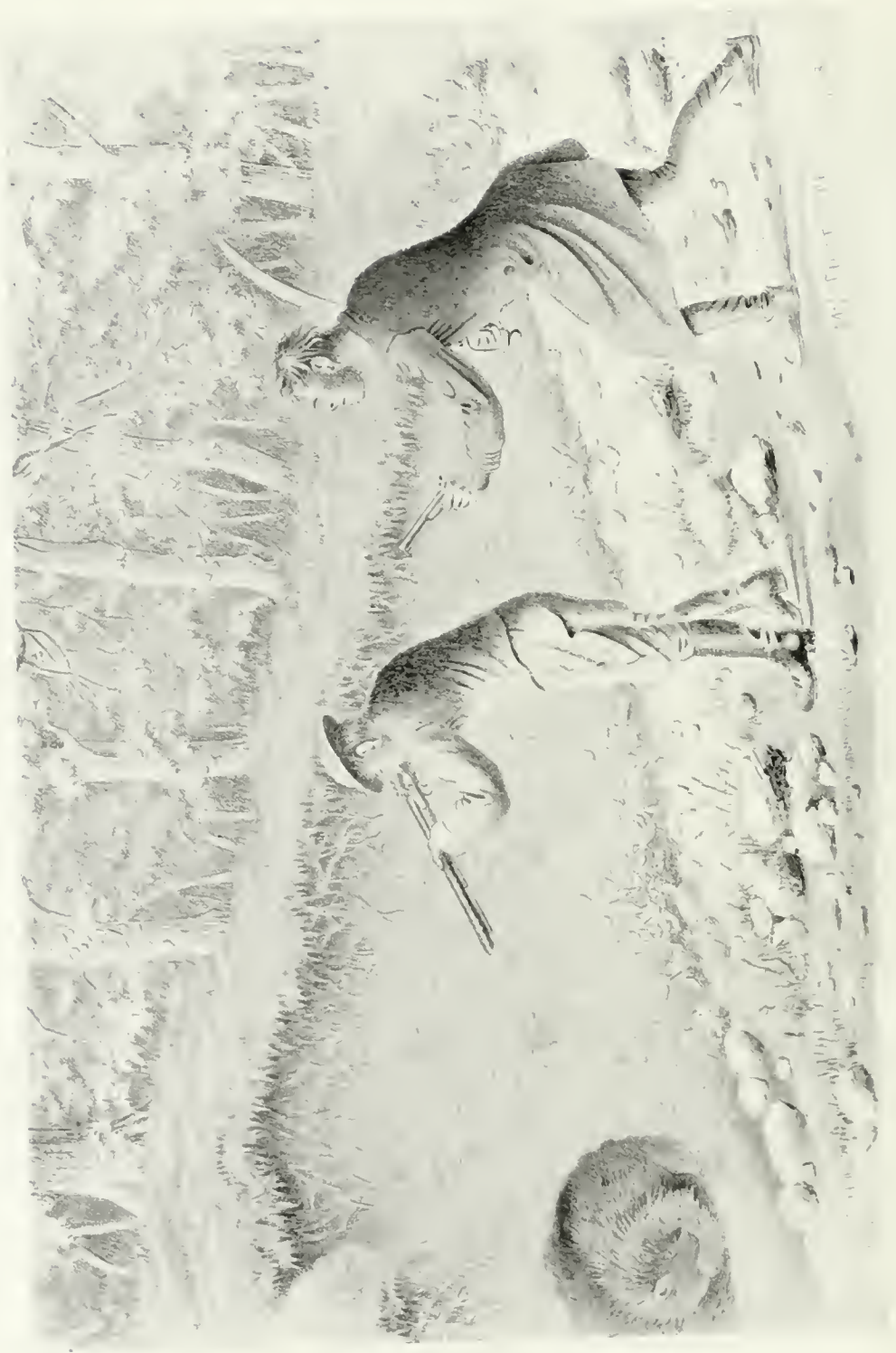
The Pachete Raja takes his title from the hill of Pachete or Punjkote, where may still be seen the ruins of the ancestral palace, once no doubt a fortress of some strength. The family seat is now at Kashipore, a few miles off. With good management the Raja's lands might have yielded a princely income, being especially rich in minerals; but like most of his class he was extravagant, and being constantly in want of ready money was much given to discounting his prospects, and for a round sum down would create encumbrances on his property, and forego future advantages in a ruinous way. So large and valuable an estate might stand this for a time; but the Raja, a bad and suspicious master, trusted no one, and was for ever meddling in details that should have been left to his managers. The consequence was that he could get no really good man to take service with him, or having done so to remain in his employ. The property had never a fair chance: things were going from bad to worse, the Raja being cheated right and left, and spending large sums in costly and profitless litigation.

A favourite way of minimising the trouble of collecting rents from such large properties is to sublet portions in *putnee talook*, and become in respect of these simply a rent-receiver. A *putnee talookdar* is something like a copyholder. So long as he pays the rent due to his superior landlord, the latter cannot interfere with him. But the law provides a very drastic procedure to compel payment of rent, empowering the Collector, at the instance of the *zemindar*, to sell up a defaulting *talookdar*, as the former is himself liable to be sold

up for non-payment of the Government Revenue. A great part of the Pachete estate was given out in putnee, and one of the talcocks comprising the station of Purulia was held by a wealthy non-resident, Baboo Ishwar Chundra Ghosal, one of whose servants was a big up-countryman generally known as the *Jemadar* (head man). Devéria's business brought him much in contact with native landholders and their underlings, and the Jemadar being rather of a sporting turn, there was in this case an additional bond of union.

On Thursday the 12th November this man appeared in the verandah, and with a deep *salâm* reported that he had heard of bears some ten or twelve miles from the station. Devéria and I had already planned an outing; so the information was opportune, and we decided to act on it. Camp equipage and servants were sent on, and next day we rode out in the afternoon. The tent lost its way; so we had to bivouack on arrival: luckily there was no failure of the commissariat, dinner was soon ready, and the tent turned up before bed-time.

The camp was in a pretty and well-wooded part of the district, S.E. of Purulia. On the first day a half-grown bear fell to Devéria's rifle. Other members of the family cannot have been far off, as this little beast was too young to be going about by himself; but the men beat badly, and probably let the others through the line. This lasted till about three in the afternoon when we returned to breakfast (!), and afterwards it was too late for anything more that day. Next morning the beaters were sent to a hill covered with jungle that looked promising; yet nothing was turned out but some pea-fowl and a spotted deer. A second hill was then tried, and drawn blank. We were just going back to the tent, when a man came and said that if we went with him he could show us a bear. Dismissing the beaters we started under his guidance and walked some way through the jungle to a dry stony nullah, into which the man pointed with an expressive countenance. Nothing was to be seen from where we stood; but descending into the gully and approaching a little dry watercourse under an overhanging bank I perceived a hollow scooped in the bank, at the mouth of which appeared the head of a bear lying asleep, its nose between its forepaws. I signed to Devéria "Shall I fire?" and he telegraphed back "Yes." So taking careful aim at the bear's head I let drive; and when the smoke



cleared there was a mass of black hair, toes up in the hole. The second barrel was fired to make sure, but was hardly needed, a Jacobs' shell in the head being an effectual sedative, even for a bear. The carcass being hauled out was found to be that of a rather small female, but with a good coat of hair. Her two little cubs, apparently a week or so old, were taken to the tent and fed with milk, but eventually both died. This was my first bear. Devéria held himself in reserve and gave me the shot, my immediate backer being a *Digwár*¹ or rural policeman whose beat lay in this part of the district, and who generally made one at any *shikár* party got up in his neighbourhood. Pratáb Chundra Dás, Digwar of the Rakáb Pergunnah, was a queer-looking specimen, and quite a character. Tall and lanky, with square shoulders and no neck, arms like flails and legs like stilts, his lean cadaverous face destitute of beard or moustache boasted an enormous mouth and flat nose with wide nostrils, beneath a low forehead thatched with a crop of snaky black locks. He went bareheaded in the jungles, dressed in a garment between a long tunic and a night-shirt that hung limp on his spare figure, skin-tight drawers on his spindle-shanks, and immense native shoes turned up at the toes. Altogether he was not an Adonis; and his voice was a squeaky falsetto; but in spite of his grotesque appearance and comical address, he was reliable and staunch, and one of the best officers of rural police in the district. He possessed a huge *tulwár* and old brass-barrelled pistol, both of which weapons he wielded on this occasion, but which were happily not needed: the pistol at least might have been more dangerous to its owner than to the bear. Next morning (16th November) we rode into Purulia—"Charlie" fresh as a daisy, and pulling like a steam-engine.

Tuesday the 17th November began badly. Poor "John's" case became hopeless: he fell down in the compound and there lay, unable to get up. I sent a note to Devéria, asking him to come over, and a

¹ Besides chowkeedars or village watchmen, there is in Western Bengal a large body of rural police who are not paid in cash, but hold land on condition of service. In old times zemindars found it convenient to entertain a force of this kind, to protect their borders from incursions by the neighbouring wild tribes. They are called *Ghátwáls* (i.e. guardians of the *Ghâts* or hill-passes), *Digwárs*, *Jagheerdárs*, &c. Their services, originally of a private nature, are now rendered to Government, and they perform police duties in subordination to the regular Constabulary.

bullet through the head closed the unlucky horse's career. The carcase had not been committed to the earth when the sound of many voices in the verandah indicated something unusual. Going out I was told by a portly Baboo, in the service of the talookdar Ishwar Chundra Ghosal, that news had just been brought of a *bágh* at a village near the station, where he could be made to "eat bullets" if the Sahibs liked to go after him. So mounting "Charlie" I cantered over to Devéria's bungalow, where I found the brothers Garbett:¹ the information being apparently good, and the place not distant, it was resolved to go out at once.

Garbett senior was too lazy to join the party, which thus consisted of Devéria, G. junior, and myself. The animal being described as a *bágh* was supposed to be a hyæna or leopard, possibly a wolf; so on the chance of getting at him on horseback spears were taken as well as rifles, and some of Devéria's dogs were also brought, as likely to be useful in cover. Devéria was on a friend's horse "Killallan," owned by a young Irish civilian, nephew of our Commissioner—a queer-tempered brute of a Waler that required *riding*, but was first-rate across country with a good man like D. on his back. Garbett's mount was old "Garibaldi," and I rode the gallant "Charlie," my surviving steed. The cavalcade was numerous and of motley appearance: first the European riders; then the Baboo who brought the news on an ambling pony; a crowd of natives, servants with guns, spears, dogs &c. bringing up the rear. Arrived at the village of Lakdah, three miles west of Purulia near the Ranchi Road, we were told that the *bágh* had just clawed a boy, who had been pitching stones at him. Without this positive statement it would have been difficult to believe that anything bigger than a fox or jackal could be in such ground. It was a rolling stretch of upland traversed by a beaten track leading to the village, bare of cover, except for a heavy crop of green paddy growing in a depression that ran like a creek into the high land sloping upward to the village, in a series of terraced fields gradually diminishing in depth as they approached the highest level where cultivation ceased. Some men standing about declared that this was the spot, and pointed out the paddy-fields as the place where

¹ The elder Garbett, a Lieutenant in the Staff Corps, was my Senior Assistant: his younger brother, reading for the army, was for the time more or less of an idler.



ADVENTURE AT PURULIA.—OPENING OF THE BALL

11-21-5-97

the *bágh* lay hid. Moreover an old fellow showed where the boy had been throwing stones, and there sure enough were blood-marks, and a bit of scalp clawed off his head. The scent was getting warm ; and the excitement increased when Devéria, who had been searching for marks in the soft ground at the edge of the paddy-fields, suddenly called out : “ By Jove, it’s a big tiger ! ”—and from the tracks there could be little doubt that he was right. This being a more serious business than had been expected, a council was held, and it was decided to make the men beat up the creek above-mentioned in line with their tom-toms, while we stood on the high ground, ready to shoot when the game appeared. But our native allies, having learnt the nature of the beast, strongly objected to this plan, so there was nothing for it but to give them a lead. Cramming the villagers into the paddy, Devéria and I headed them with our rifles, and proceeded to walk up the cover in line, keeping a bright look-out. One of Devéria’s dogs “ Pompey,” a very courageous but rather surly animal, stoutly built and smooth-haired, a mongrel with a strong strain of the village paria, had been let loose and began ranging about in a business-like way. Presently he gave tongue, which showed that the game was afoot. The beaters bolted like men, leaving Devéria and me to look after ourselves. It would have been but prudent to follow their example, or at least to execute a strategic movement to the bank ; but like an ass I continued poking about as if I were looking for *snipe*, and Devéria not liking to leave me, stayed in the paddy also, against his better judgment. I was standing on one of the *áils* or small ridges of earth with which rice-land is criss-crossed in all directions, when I became aware of a broad countenance decorated with stripes, coming at me through the tall paddy. There was just time to think, “ Well, now I *am* in for it ! ” and to fire one barrel, when I was knocked over on my back, my rifle nowhere, and the tiger on top of me seizing my left shoulder. Seeing what had happened, Devéria and Garbett were rushing to the rescue, when the tiger left me and made towards them, so they in turn had to retreat. This gave me time to pick up myself and weapon, and do what I should have done before—get out of the cover. At the moment I felt little or no pain, indeed hardly knew I was bitten till I saw that my coat was torn and there was a little blood. The arm felt rather numb and weak, but I managed to reload ; and the ball being

now fairly opened, business began in earnest, the guns taking post on the high bank, while the dog skirmished in the field below.

And right gallantly did old "Pompey" go in and bay the tiger, making him jump about, whisking his tail and roaring in bitterness of spirit at being persecuted by such an insignificant little creature. Except when this war-dance was going on, little or nothing could be seen of either animal, the crop stood so high and thick; but the waving of the paddy indicated their whereabouts. At last Garbett got a chance and scored a hit, as appeared from the floundering and commotion that followed the shot. I fired too, without visible effect. Meantime Devéria took things coolly and made better shooting. He first gave the beast one from his big 12-bore in the leg, and shortly after getting another glimpse of the enemy, sent a bullet through his shoulder. This was evidently a hard hit, for on receiving the shot the tiger reared up straight on end, gnawing one of his forepaws,—a grand sight. As he was standing up, Garbett and I fired at him almost together, and this time I thought I hit him. Again subsiding, the tiger vanished in the green sea of paddy, and for some seconds all was still; no sign or sound from him or "Pompey," and we began to fear that the dog had been caught at last, when once more his sturdy bark proclaimed him unhurt. Hurrah for "Pompey"! His antagonist still remaining silent it was resolved to make a closer investigation; so loosing all the other dogs (hitherto kept in leash) we cautiously advanced towards the spot where "Stripes" had last been seen. Devéria was leading in his usual dare-devil way, when he noticed one of the tiger's paws moving rather unnaturally, and going nearer found the beast lying dead, with "Pompey" worrying his paw, as if it were a jackal! And if ever dog deserved a V.C. for distinguished gallantry in the field, surely that dog was "Pompey"; for he showed both pluck and judgment, "holding" the tiger from first to last with dauntless spirit, while he kept clear of claws and teeth, and never got a scratch.

The adventure thus satisfactorily ended, the natives soon gathered round, the fallen foe was hoisted on a buffalo *suggur* and conveyed to the station, followed by an admiring crowd. We mounted our horses and returned, Devéria lending me "Garibaldi," a more sober mount than my own "Charlie," in consideration of my damaged bridle-arm. On the



way we came across Wilcox, just returned from a tour in the interior, who was rather astonished to hear what had taken place. Like a good Samaritan he accompanied me to the Doctor, who had his hands pretty full on that occasion, Mrs. Doctor having rather inconveniently chosen that particular time for presenting an addition to his family; so he was kept dodging about from one room to the other, and had to divide his attentions between two patients.

Meantime the *suggur* bearing the dead tiger had arrived at Wilcox's house, which was at once besieged by an excited mob of natives, all eager to get a peep at the animal. There was no keeping them out. They crowded into the compound and came even into the verandah; they swarmed over the garden to the no small detriment of Wilcox's pet flower-beds (he was a great gardener), and it was some time before they had had their fill of staring, and could be induced to go away. Sundry of my subordinates came to make inquiries: wonderful reports had got about before the truth was known: it was at first rumoured that I had been *shot*.

The tiger was measured, and found to be nine feet three inches as he lay. Allowing for his having been cramped up on the *suggur* that brought him in, it was thought that another inch or two might not unfairly be added. He had a bright handsome skin, short tail, and beautifully perfect teeth. From this, and his small size, it appeared that he was a young tiger. His presence in such unlikely ground may be explained on the supposition that, overtaken by daylight at a distance from jungle, he had made for the nearest cover. Being in a strange place he was apparently cowed, and this was lucky for us. There was nothing to prevent his attacking each or any of us in turn, but except when he came at me (and I had got so close to him without knowing it, that he probably did so in self-defence) he never once charged home, though once or twice in his scrimmages with the dog he came rather near us. By the law of "first blood" the spoils belonged to Garbett, though there can be little doubt that Devéria's shots were the fatal ones. The skull was presented to me, and needless to say is valued as a memento of an adventure, that might have ended differently. The tiger indeed had not made the most of his opportunity, and inflicted only flesh wounds,—three teeth penetrating behind the point of the shoulder, and one

between chest and shoulder just in front of the armpit :—there was also a claw mark on my back. I had great reason to be thankful for escaping without broken bones.

But one does not get bowled over by a tiger—even a small one—without unpleasant consequences. At first I was not very bad, and joined the party at dinner, which included both Garbetts and Devéria, and no doubt was rather festive ; but next day came the reaction, and I remember very little of what happened for several days, my old Letts' Diary containing the brief entry : “ Seedy.” The Doctor said afterwards that at one time he was afraid of tetanus, in which case there might have been a step for some of my juniors, and this chronicle would not have been written ; but events were ordered otherwise. My note-book when resumed recorded sundry “ complications.” which if interesting to a doctor are not agreeable to the patient. For weeks I was more or less on my back, and had fine opportunities of testing the resources of the local Dispensary and surgery. Everybody was very good. Wilcox, in whose house I stayed more than three months, was kindness itself, and a cheery companion in many a tedious hour. Devéria was unremitting in his attentions, and showed a constant and lively interest in my progress, sometimes helping the Doctor as an amateur dresser. The *medico* himself took no end of trouble on my account, for some time coming twice in the day and once during the small hours, when he appeared like Diogenes with a lantern. My Musulmán factotum Piroo, from Dacca, originally a khansamah, promoted to be major domo for exceptional honesty and efficiency, was a model of fidelity. He slept in my room, and was always at hand to get anything that was wanted—his was no sinecure during restless nights. This good fellow showed genuine concern, and seemed almost angry with the Doctor when he had to use severe treatment. With all this, the process of recovery was slow and tedious. I got as weak as a rat, and one day found my legs trembling under me after walking a few yards. In appearance I became a veritable scarecrow, like Shock-headed Peter in the German picture-book, being for many days unshaven and unshorn : indeed my beard dates from the day of the tiger-fight, for I could no longer shave myself and did not care to call in the native barber, so let it grow. I applied for leave, but there was a difficulty about a substitute, so I gave up the idea ; and the Commissioner

Colonel Dalton very considerably made allowances for any shortcomings in the District work arising from my invalid condition.

Meanwhile the great world roared and rolled on as usual ; and our little society buzzed away its daily round, life being for the most part uneventful. On the 30th November however there was again a little excitement. News came of another *bágh*, which turned out to be a leopard, and was accounted for in a sugar-cane patch by Wilcox, the two Garbetts and Devéria in a most sportsmanlike manner, after being “coursed” across some dry stubble-fields by “Pompey” and “Stump.”—the latter a dear hairy old dog belonging to Wilcox, a beautiful retriever, with an honest face, a very stump of a tail, and courage almost equal to that of “Pompey,” without his surly temper. It must have been a pretty sight to see these two dogs running the leopard across the open,—one on each side,—the leopard making fierce snaps first at one and then at the other as he vainly tried to shake off his pursuers. This adventure passed off without mishap ; the hunters walked the leopard up shoulder to shoulder, and shot him before he could do mischief. A leopard is generally considered more courageous than a tiger, and is of course most dangerous in dense cover like sugar-cane. A tiger and leopard bagged near the station within a fortnight, was not bad for Purulia.

On the 3rd December Garbett senior left for Ranchi on transfer, his brother remaining at Purulia and staying with Wilcox. Two days after, the District staff was reinforced by Baboo Chundra Narayan Singh, sent from Hooghly to do duty as Deputy Magistrate and Collector. He turned out a decided acquisition ; being a smart young officer, singularly free from self-sufficiency and conceit, so common in Young Bengális.

Christmas Day was marked by a dinner with *simkin sharáb*, *ham gosht*, *pullum pudding* (khitmutgar lingo) and other seasonable delicacies. We mustered tolerably strong at table ; but the pleasure of all was sadly marred by the absence of our genial District Superintendent, who was investigating a case of dacoity or gang-robbery in the interior. Ducas, the Engineer from Burrakur, one of the Christmas guests, left Purulia next day for Chyebassa in Singhbhoom, the adjoining district on the south, to which station a *pucka* (bridged and metalled) road was

projected, in extension of that connecting Purulia with the railway at Burrakur.

On the 31st December Mackenzie, Assistant in charge of the Govindpore Subdivision on the Grand Trunk Road (which passes through the northern part of Manbhoom), wrote to say that the Commissioner with his niece was marching down from Govindpore, and asked to have the gaps in the (unbridged) road made passable by sloping ; so the Overseer was ordered out to do the needful. This recalls the passage in Isaiah (xl. 4) : "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low ; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain." So many things in India illustrate the Eastern origin of the Scriptures :—the shepherd leading his flock ; unmuzzled oxen treading out the corn ; the house-top used as a place of family resort ; women grinding at the mill ;—these and other Oriental customs unchanged for ages are seen in sharp contrast with the fashions of the nineteenth century and the rush and hurry of modern life.

And thus closes the year 1868, which to me at least had not been uneventful.

1869.

On New Year's Day Ducas, back from Chyebassa, went with me to view the site selected for a new Cutcherry building to be erected at Purulia, the old one becoming too small for the increased staff and multiplying records. There had been a clearance of these during the Mutiny year, when the local regiment known as the Ramghur Battalion broke out, and the bazar *budmāshes* (bad characters) fired the Cutcherry. The building was saved ; and the scorched beams remained to bear witness to the doings of that troublous time. The Pachete Raja was credited with the instigation of this act of incendiarism, in the hope it was said of profiting by the destruction of certain inconvenient documents relating to his property. He was imprisoned for some time in the Bancoora Jail, and gained nothing by the bonfire, copies being obtained of important papers that had disappeared.

On the 2nd of January Wilcox returned from camp, bringing with him Colonel Paterson, then officiating as Inspector General of Police, who was on tour. He was fond of shooting, and joined the local

Nimrods in persecuting the snipe, ducks, quail, and other small game to be found in the neighbourhood. Ladies were scarce at Purulia, and the amusements generally of a masculine type, as bathing in the Lake (very popular¹); jackal or fox-hunting; shooting; and cricket. This last was pursued under difficulties as regards the ground. There was a nice *maidán* between Wilcox's house and the Lake, but it took a deal of coaxing to make the grass grow. The dry climate of Chota Nagpore is less favourable to the production of fine turf than the warm damp atmosphere and rich soil of the Gangetic Delta. But with assiduous watering and constant attention, a fair "pitch" was at last obtained.

Colonel Dalton arrived on the 13th. His camp, pitched on the *maidán* above mentioned, with tents, elephants and servants made the place lively. A flagstaff with the Union Jack displayed stood in front of the Commissioner's tent, indicating his rank as Governor General's Agent, which entitled him to a salute of several guns on certain occasions. He made no long stay at Purulia, and after inspecting the new Cutcherry site, Jail and offices, and hospitably entertaining some of the residents, left on the 18th for Ranehi.

The late turn-up with the tiger having shown the advantages of a big rifle, I got from Messrs. Manton of Calcutta a double breech-loading 12-bore by Westley Richards—a powerful weapon, beautifully finished, and appropriately adorned with the portrait of a tiger *couchant* engraved on the trigger-guard. It certainly was expensive; but has since proved well worth its cost, and more too.

On the 16th February the remains of an unfortunate young native were brought in to Purulia—killed and partly eaten by a tiger. The body, done up in a piece of matting, was a ghastly sight,—the middle

¹ Among the most amphibious of Purulians were Wilcox and Devéria, who revelled in the water like seals. The former made a rhyme, in derision of one who was not quite so devoted to aquatics:—

There was a young man of Purulia
Whose conduct was very peculiar;—
When asked to have a *ghusl* (bath)
He gave a dirty refusal—
This eccentric young man of Purulia!

In the 3rd and 4th lines the metre halts rather; but that is a trifle.

eaten clean away, and the legs *doubled up over the shoulders*. The man's father came with the cart that brought the body, and said that his son had been seized while driving buffaloes home in the evening, at a place some eight miles off. The tiger had evidently sprung at the throat, in which were gaping tooth-holes, and the calm expression on the face showed that death must have been almost instantaneous. Wilcox, Garbett and I started out, but being hardly up to riding yet I had to go in a palki, and there was so much delay in getting bearers that we never reached the place; and after picnicking under a tree returned to the station, where we arrived at about one o'clock in the morning. A day or two afterwards a *hánk* (drive) was arranged, and the Doctor gave me leave to join it. As far as the main object was concerned, the expedition was a failure, for nothing was seen of the man-eater; but I felt much the better for the outing. The sensation of freedom and active movement after being so long boxed up was delicious:—almost like new life.

This was the first case of man-eating that came under my own observation, but deaths by tigers were not unfrequently reported by the Police. Shortly before the above incident a shooting party was made up, which being on the sick-list I did not join, and lent "Charlie" to young Garbett who wanted a mount. The syce was sent out to attend the horse, but *never turned up*. It was just possible that he had run away, being under warning to leave, but this seemed unlikely, as money was due to him for wages. Some time after it was reported by the Digwar Pratáb Chundra Dás (see p. 227), that a carter driving along a jungly road had seen a tiger standing over the body of a man; the road being one that might very likely have been taken by the syce as a short cut to the camp for which he was bound. The inference was that he had been killed by a man-eater, but the fact was never definitely ascertained.

On the 26th February another party was got up to Hura, a very jungly place twenty miles east of Purulia on the Bancoora Road. In those days, there were few made roads in Manbhoom except the Grand Trunk, Burrakur and Ranchi Roads, and the last two were not completely bridged. Cart-tracks following the natural level of the country were the usual lines of communication, and far pleasanter to ride over than

straight monotonous embanked roads. The way to Hura was along one of these simple thoroughfares. Arrived at our destination we found that *atars*¹ had been arranged in line at the likely places, and all was ready for driving the jungles.

Shooting from *atars* is the favourite native method ; and is resorted to by Europeans also in big jungles where the exact whereabouts of game is doubtful, or when dangerous animals are expected. Not a very sportsmanlike mode of hunting, but sometimes almost unavoidable. The beaters are formed in line, and making a hideous din with *nágaras* (big drums), tomtoms (smaller dittoes), and cholera-horns or conches, endeavour to collect and drive past the *atars* whatever game may be in the jungle. As a matter of fact, the line is rarely well kept, especially in thick cover or difficult ground ; and it is most annoying to the shooters sometimes, after waiting patiently for an hour or more, to see the beaters come out of the jungle following each other in single file along the easiest path, instead of keeping touch right and left in extended order, and sweeping through the cover in that formation. Sometimes a huge circle is formed, and the game driven in from all sides.

On this occasion a big bear was turned out and received with a regular fusillade, seven shots being fired. Joll (who had joined the party from Burrakur) was credited with a hit, and the bear was tracked for some distance by the blood, but there was not much of it, and the traces gradually got fainter till they were lost in the stony jungle. Just before the bear appeared, when all were on the alert, a footstep was heard coming *pit-pat, pit-pat* in the dry fallen leaves, and a splendid peacock stalked out and flew down the line, his gorgeous tail streaming behind, but no one fired, as bigger game was expected. In the evening more bears were found and fired at, but nothing was brought to book. To-day I rode Wilcox's smart little pony "Cockywax,"—my first mount since the 17th November.

We returned to Purulia on the 1st March, and as Campbell and I were riding along a jungly part of the road in the morning, a *nilgai* pursued by a village paria crossed the road in front of us. It was the first I had seen

¹ *Atars* or *macháns* are pulpit-like platforms of boughs constructed in trees to shoot from.

wild, and looked something like a tapir, or very large pig. A new pony arrived to-day, bought for me from the Resident at Munipore by a man in Cachar whom I had met at Dacca. "Sambo" was jet black, with rather a heavy head, but clean sinewy legs, and looked like work. He was too impetuous for me at first, but turned out a very useful servant when we got on terms with each other.

The cold weather—colder in Chota Nagpore than Eastern Bengal—had now run its course: the temperature was fast rising, and the west wind blew hotter and hotter every day, driving clouds of dust over ground baked as hard as a brick. The sky no longer blue assumed a fierce brazen tint, the air was thick and hazy, and the atmosphere glowed like a furnace. The hot weather had fairly set in. Visitors were few and far between, now that the camping season was over; but on the 18th March the Bishop of Calcutta passed through from Ranchi on his way to the railway, and with his chaplain stayed to breakfast. Dr. Milman, who succeeded to the Bishopric at Dr. Cotton's untimely death (see p. 131), had been holding a Visitation in Chota Nagpore, where dissensions had arisen in the German Mission of the "Berlin Committee," of which there was a branch in Manbhoom. The quarrel resulted in a schism, the malcontents deciding to renounce their allegiance to the said Committee and join the Church Missionary Society, which made no difficulty about receiving them. These matters called for the intervention of the Bishop, now bound for Calcutta, who was shortly to return and take over the Mission.

About this time Dr. Wilson left Purulia on transfer, being relieved by a native Assistant Surgeon; and I made one at a shooting party to a place called Neogurh where a *hánk* had been arranged by an old gentleman known as the Lal Sahib,¹ one of the numerous relatives of the Pachete Raja. He failed to show sport, and to me the occasion is chiefly memorable from the discovery on my return that I was not yet quite sound. One of the "complications" which had been bothering since the 17th of November showed signs of giving trouble again, and Dr. Wilson's successor pulled a long face over the symptoms. The Baboo did not inspire confidence, and this last relapse was very discouraging. At length I determined to apply for leave and go to

¹ This title is given to several of the Raja's relations.

Calcutta for the opinion and advice of a first-rate surgeon. Colonel Dalton endorsed the application, and this time there was no difficulty about a substitute.

On the 1st April I moved into the Doctor's old house, which being smaller and nearer Cutcherry was more convenient than the big bungalow I had hitherto occupied. On the 3rd a leopard was brought in, having been shot with an arrow, and clawed the bowman in the face. He was sent to hospital. The hunters were plucky fellows, and well deserved the Government reward.

My successor Captain Walcott arrived from Hazáribágh on the 5th, so I had to turn out of my house, and on the 7th left for Burrakur. Travelling by easy stages, and having spent a day or two with the hospitable Ducas and Joll, I reached Calcutta on the 12th, and found myself once more in the green luxuriance of Lower Bengal, a pleasant change after the baking atmosphere and burnt-up country I had just left, and among the familiar sights and sounds of Calcutta. One of the first things I did was to have my hair cut, and brushed by machinery (Calcutta hairdressers charge a rupee, but after Mofussil barbers the luxury is worth it), and before evening was comfortably lodged at the Club. The refinements of civilisation are keenly appreciated after being in the jungles for a time. I wrote to Dr. (now Sir Joseph) Fayrer and made an appointment. Then in the evening I repaired to the Eden Gardens, admired the beauty and fashion there assembled, had a chat with Dampier the Secretary, and listened to the band of the gallant Cameronians, finishing up with dinner at the Club, in an atmosphere of brilliant lights, dress-coats, velvet-footed khitmutgars in spotless white, their turbans decorated with the Club badge, and amid all this splendour felt that I was indeed once more in the City of Palaces.

Next morning Dr. Fayrer came over with considerate promptitude, and having made his examination prescribed a simple application and the use of a galvanic battery, and advised a trip to sea. He said that probably the shoulder would be permanently stiff, but that I should have a *good* arm; and for this verdict, pronounced by one of the first surgeons in India, I was most thankful. He said that Dr. Wilson

at Purulia had treated me very judiciously,—a feather in the cap of our old *medico*. Acting on his advice I took passage in the British India Company's steamer *Cheduba*, bound for Rangoon and Moulmein, leaving Calcutta early on the 16th April, and went on board overnight. There was a high wind, and it looked like having a rough time in the Bay.

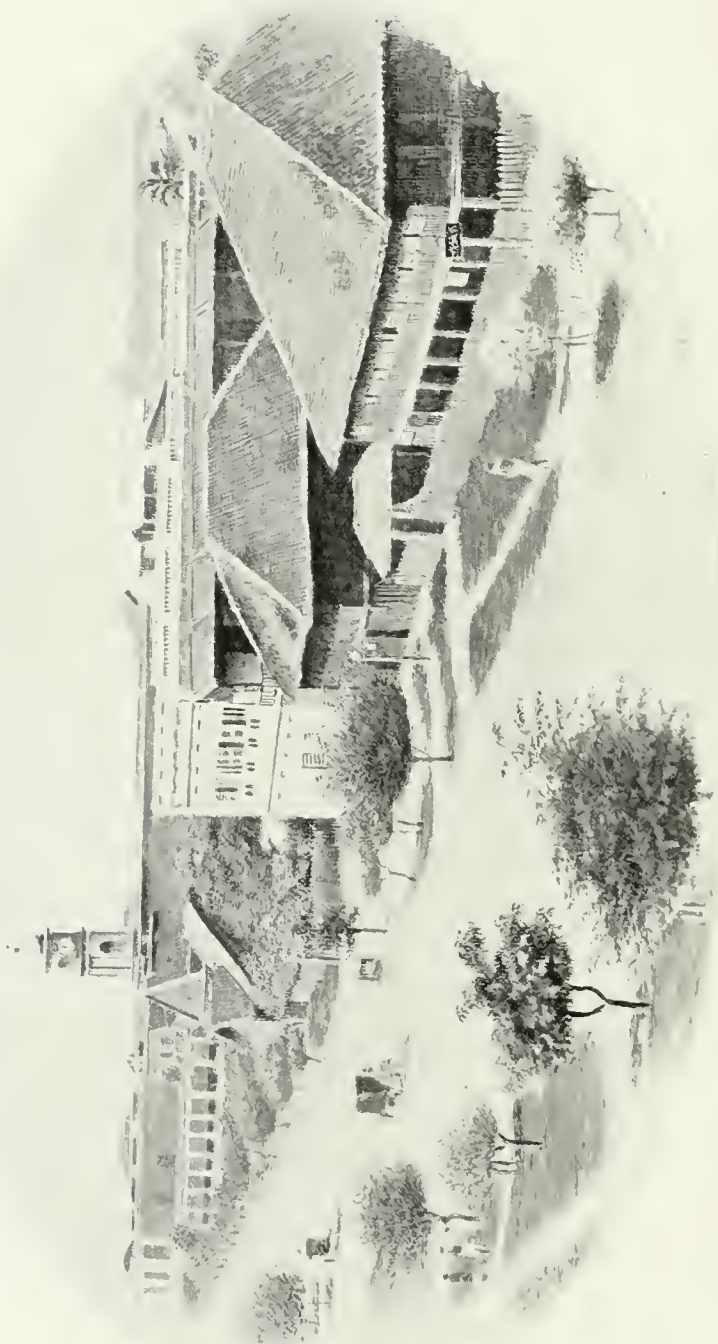
CHAPTER XI

A TRIP TO BURMA. 1869

THE forecast proved correct: even in the river it was rough, while outside it was rougher.—The *Cheduba* was bigger than the *Moulmein*, but not of large tonnage, and in anything of a sea-way very lively, to our no small discomfort. But on the 19th we ran into fine weather; and with a bright sky and gentle breezes, shoals of flying fish scudding over the smooth water, the poop-deck of the *Cheduba* with its shady awnings became a pleasant promenade, and the passengers had time to look at each other. Of these, a Captain in the Madras Staff Corps with his wife was going *viâ* Rangoon to join some appointment at Port Blair, a convict settlement in the Andaman Islands, the Botany Bay of India, which receive criminals sentenced to transportation. Natives dread crossing the sea, and have even been known to ask for a death-sentence instead of that dooming them to *dwip ántar* (the far-off island); but by all accounts they are very well off at Port Blair, and some of them end by marrying female convicts and settling, so no doubt they become resigned to the inevitable. There was a timber merchant returning to Moulmein, having been in Calcutta to look after an appeal case in the High Court, respecting teak logs—a jovial old gentleman with a wiry terrier and pet canaries;—and a barrister fresh from England, on his way to Rangoon to practise in the Courts. Calcutta *was* a great place for English barristers, some of whom have made fabulous incomes; but the field being every year more occupied, and profits reduced by competition, Burma now offered a better chance for a new man. A cinnamon-coloured lady and gentleman completed the list of saloon passengers.

About 10 o'clock that night we passed the Algnada Reef lighthouse with its bright revolving light, and next day (Tuesday, 20th April) were in sight of land, a low and jungly coast. Near the mouth of the Rangoon River the scene became more lively, ships appearing inward or outward bound, while cruising about were outlandish-looking craft like the Chinese junks or *lorchas* that used to frequent Naraingunge,—reminding us that we had left India Proper and were now approaching the land of the White Elephant, and the Monarch of the Golden Foot. Rangoon is some 30 miles up the river, which we entered towards evening, and got to our moorings about dark. The scenery between the city and the sea is rather tame. Approaching the town the most conspicuous object is the *Shwe Dagong* or great “Dagon” Pagoda, with gilded spire dominating everything in its neighbourhood. On arrival the *Cheduba* was berthed alongside one of the wharves: in this respect Rangoon was then ahead of Calcutta, where jetties had not yet been constructed, and large vessels had to lie out in the stream.

A trip on shore was pleasant after the confinement on board ship, and afforded plenty of novelty. The luxuriant foliage and soft warm air reminded one of Ceylon, but the people were different. Here was a sedate-looking Burman lounging down the street with a cheroot in his mouth, broad-shouldered and phlegmatic, looking as if he had nothing particular to do, and wouldn't do it if he had. John Chinaman in broad straw hat, long pig-tail, very loose blue dittoes and tiny shoes, sat in his shop in a cane easy-chair, smoking his pipe of opium, perhaps calculating the profits resulting from his last stroke of “pigeon,” and enjoying life in a lazy way. Chinamen can work hard if they like; but under the soothing influence of the Burmese climate can also take things easy. Some of the houses were brick and plaster like those of Calcutta, stiff and uninteresting; others, regular Burmese bungalows, charmingly suggestive of cool dark rooms, long chairs, punkahs, iced “pegs,” and indolence;—wooden structures on posts, with high-pitched roofs covered with thatch, tiles or shingles, projecting eaves, deep galleries and verandahs running round outside. These were often enclosed, and made into external rooms with shuttered windows opening to the outer air, pleasant to sit in except during the heat of the day, when the inner apartments would be cooler. The design reminds one



of Swiss cottages. Like the Swiss, the Burmese are clever workers in wood, and decorate the eaves and gable ends of their houses with elaborate and grotesque carvings. Fond of colour, both men and women are very picturesque in their white jackets, gay turbans, and *loongees*, a kind of loose skirt that clothes the lower part of the body, in patterns resembling the Scottish tartan. Groups of Burmese thus dressed look much better than Bengalis in their monotonous white garments. Both sexes are great smokers, and it was a little startling at first to see a pretty girl puffing away at a big cheroot, and then sticking it coquettishly *in* (not behind) her ear, the lobe of which when pierced for the enormous ear-ornament, makes a convenient cigar-holder. The Burmese are an easy-going, careless sort of people, loving show and gaiety. The men, often of fine physique, indulge in wrestling, boating and other manly pastimes; but are at the same time incorrigibly lazy and averse to anything like sustained exertion. It has been said that they would make good soldiers but for their indolence and impatience of discipline. They tattoo the skin mostly on the lower limbs, and some of the designs are very elaborate.

Rangoon was a busy port, fast becoming a fine town; with broad streets well laid out, some planted with trees, and handsome houses. But there was an unfinished look about the place; building was still going on, and many streets were indicated merely by boards bearing the names in English and Burmese characters, and boundary lines marked out, showing where the frontage was to be. The main thoroughfares only appeared to be named, cross-streets being numbered after the American fashion.

Wishing to visit the Great Pagoda, we looked out for a conveyance. The *ticca garis* of Rangoon are drawn by ponies and driven by Madrasis. There was a decided twang of the Southern Presidency about the place. In fact, Burma seemed to be a sort of preserve for the Madras services, and the administration both military and civil was largely officered from across the Bay. This may have originated when Burma was more accessible from Madras than Bengal; but there have been changes of late years, and civilians are now sent to Burma direct from home. In military matters Burma is still I believe under Madras.

The Madrasi *gari wallahs* were an independent, not to say insolent lot; and I heartily wished some of them in my district, where they could have been treated to a little wholesome Non-Regulation discipline; but terms were arranged at last, and when started the *gari* went along at a good pace. This however was less to the credit of the driver than of the animal, a stout little pony, very different from those wretched bags of skin and bone, the *gari-tattoos* of Bengal. Horses were rare in Rangoon, almost everything being done by tats. Burma ponies are known all over India, and (unlike prophets) not without honour even in their own country. They are generally punchy, game-looking little beasts, with hogged manes and fine thick tails, sturdy and enduring, like small cart-horses. The Manipuri is lighter built, more like a miniature hackney, but is a near relative of the Burma pony, the breed having been produced by a cross of Arab blood in the stables of some previous Raja of Manipore; at least that is the tradition. Burmas command a high price: Rs. 200 to 300 would not be too much for a good one; while an animal for racing purposes might run into four figures. The market is supplied from the country of the Shans, who every year bring down ponies for sale from their native hills.

The *Shwe Dagong* or Great Pagoda stands on an eminence overlooking the town and surrounding country, which near Rangoon is mostly level. The name "Dagon" Pagoda is a corruption of the Burmese epithet, signifying "Golden." Access to the top is had by a succession of covered stairways, the roofs supported by wooden columns, which are simply the trunks of fine teak trees dressed to a cylindrical shape and painted red. At intervals are vestibules or landings, gaudily painted within and decorated with grotesque pictures and devices. Some of these represent in a horribly realistic manner the most fiendish tortures inflicted by diabolical executioners on stolid-looking victims, the effusion of blood being depicted with a *gusto* that shows the artist to have had a true Oriental love for unpleasant details. The faithful Piroo who was with me, after looking at these frescoes for some time, said simply he supposed God had given the country to the English, being angry at this infernal cruelty. Other and evidently more recent paintings are comical,—*e.g.* a ridiculous

traveller on an impossible horse about to cross a river, and meeting an amiable-looking alligator; a wonderful steam-boat, all paddle-boxes; a very unflattering portrait of Tommy Atkins, and so on. These stair-cases lead to a spacious courtyard or plateau surrounded by a low wall, from the centre of which rises the spire, to a height of over 300 feet.¹ The word "spire" hardly describes the structure, which is more like the neck and shoulders of a bottle cut off and stuck on a broad pyramidal pedestal, the top surmounted by an "umbrella" or golden cage hung with numerous bells, to the clappers of which are attached long pendants; these when swung by the wind make a very pretty tinkling. The "spire" had been gilt, but when I saw it most of the gilding had worn off, except where a fresh bit here and there attested the work of some pious worshipper, for to regild the spire of *Shwe Dagong* is considered a meritorious act.² The plateau is paved, and shaded by fine trees. Round about are several chapels or shrines, containing figures of Buddha, generally more than life-size, some carved in wood, others of white marble, painted and gilt.

From its commanding situation the Pagoda is important as a military post; and a guard-house on the plateau is occupied by a detachment of British infantry. During the Burmese war, the temple was stormed and taken, and the graves of officers who fell in the assault are seen near the rampart. In the shrines round the Pagoda are some gigantic bells, hung on huge beams, covered with Burmese inscriptions. These are too ponderous to swing, but when struck with a wooden club kept handy for the purpose make a humming booming sound that can be heard a long way off. The story goes that one of these bells—the most famous—was to be sent to England, much against the will of the Burmese, who regarded the proceedings as sacrilegious. It was being slung on board ship when the tackle failed, and the bell dived into the mud. Then at last the British Goths relented, and restored the venerated object to the Pagoda whence it had been taken. The plateau affords a fine view of the town, river, the Rangoon Lakes and surrounding country.

¹ According to Mr. V. Ball, 320 feet. *Jungle Life in India*, p. 219.

² In 1887-8 the Pagoda was regilt at a cost of close upon 3 lakhs (300,000) of rupees. *The Shwe Dagon Pagoda, Rangoon*, by T. Hesketh Biggs, F.S.S.

On one of the landings near the top of the stairs was a young lady, painting her eyebrows in a most coquettish way. Her complexion was rather waxen, but she was not bad-looking. Many of the Burmese girls have pretty faces of the Mongolian type, like the painted ivory ones on Chinese or Japanese ornaments, and they make the most of their good looks by dressing in bright colours, sticking flowers in their hair, and other devices to attract admiration, which after the shrinking shyness of Bengali women are quite refreshing.

Leaving the Pagoda we visited the town gardens and lakes, beautiful and well-kept; though for clearness of water the Purulia Lake was far ahead of that at Rangoon. The *Cheduba* left for Moulmein in the evening. It was a short run, and the sea apparently shallow—nowhere blue, but generally green, and in places even muddy. A vessel going from the mouth of the Irawaddy to that of the Salween keeps along the coast, and is never far from land. The Captain said that navigation is dangerous from mud-banks and shoal water. Next evening we anchored off the mouth of the river: the coast was bold and hilly, something like Chittagong. A native pilot came on board about 9 p.m., and we arrived off the town towards midnight.

Friday, April 23rd.—Moulmein looks small after Rangoon; but is prettily situated amongst wooded hills, with white pagodas peeping out between the trees over the broad Salween. This river, like others in these parts, is rapid and dangerous, as appears from the following incident. An officer of one of the British India Co.'s steamers was seeing some passengers over the side when he missed his footing and fell into the water. The current was so strong that he was at once carried away, and the body was not recovered. The town is built on a hill-side: the roads are therefore steep and as a rule very bad: at least, this was the case in 1869.

The great product of Moulmein is timber; though the trade was said to have fallen off of late years. At one of the principal mills I saw huge logs being sliced up into planks by vertical, circular, and other saws, all driven by steam. Elephants were at work in the yard, moving and stacking logs, driven by Madrasis, not seated on the neck like an Indian mahout, but perched on a sort of trestle arrangement on the animal's back. One elephant was dragging a log by a chain:



when he had got it far enough he unhooked the chain with his trunk and deposited the load. Another hoisted a huge balk of timber on his tusks, and holding it tight with his trunk, carried it quite comfortably. Wonderful tales are told of these timber-yard elephants, as for instance how a knowing old fellow engaged in stacking logs, steps back every now and then with his head cocked on one side and one eye shut, to see if the stack is symmetrical and every log in line. I must say I did not see *this*; but the big beasts showed great sagacity in understanding what was wanted, and docility in carrying out the drivers' orders.

The Moulmein Pagoda stands on a hill near the town. Though smaller than *Shwe Dagong* it is a striking object, and the natural surroundings are more picturesque than those at Rangoon. The neighbourhood of Moulmein seemed well worth exploring by any one fond of tropical scenery. The house I stayed in was large and roomy; but there is one disadvantage about a Burmese bungalow, that it is almost impossible to move about the wood floors without making a great noise. The covering of shingles too does not keep the house nearly so cool as the thatched roof of a Bengal bungalow. The great charm is the deep verandah, in which on cane lounges and other luxurious couches the inhabitants spend great part of the day. Being raised on piles the houses are probably kept fairly dry even in so damp a climate as that of Lower Burma, where the annual rainfall I believe averages 200 inches or more.

We left Moulmein on the afternoon of Saturday the 24th April, and on the way down the river a lascar fell overboard. He was picked up by a country canoe, and the ship did not wait for him. This seemed rather inconsiderate, but doubtless the man found his way back to Moulmein, and thence on board one or other of the steamers belonging to the British India Company, which constantly ply along the coast. On the 25th we reached Rangoon, where the *Cheduba* coaled. The rise and fall of the spring-tides¹ at Rangoon is something tremendous. I don't know what it may be in feet, but remember that at low water it was a tough climb up the gangway from the *Cheduba's* poop to the jetty, while at high water it was a steep descent to the

¹ It was full moon on the 26th, according to my old Letts' Diary.

same point. On this occasion I went to see the "Glass Pagoda," a collection of idol-houses elaborately decorated with wood-carving, painting, and inlaid work of glass or tale. This was at Kemendine, two or three miles out of the town,—a very pretty drive. Pine-apples grew in profusion in plantations by the roadside, like cabbages in a kitchen-garden at home. I also visited some large rice and saw-mills on Pussendom (Prawn) Creek belonging to Messrs. Bulloch Brothers and Co., a leading firm in the ports along this coast.

On the 27th after noon we started for Akyab, and next day were running north along a wild picturesque coast,—hills and jungle, with sandy beach, and rocky islets near the shore. We passed a large three-masted ship that lay with her bows driven high up on a rock, the bowsprit pointing in the air straight for the land, and her stern awash. The masts were standing and sails set: from a distance she had the appearance of a vessel in full sail making for the shore, which looked very close. How she got into such a position was a mystery. The ship, said to have been bound from Calcutta for Liverpool, was evidently abandoned, the crew having as we heard got ashore at Bassein: nothing could be done to help her, so we continued on our way. Akyab light was sighted on Thursday evening (29th April), but a squall coming on we had to anchor outside and got to the wharf early on Friday morning.

The harbour of Akyab is very pretty, at the mouth of the Kola-dyne River, which being nearly shut in from the sea by a rocky island bearing a lighthouse, looks like a land-locked basin. The station itself is flat, but hill-ranges are in sight to the eastward as at Chittagong, though they seem further off. There is a club, and good sea-bathing. One of our passengers, the City Magistrate of Akyab, returning from Rangoon, hospitably asked me to breakfast at his house, where I made acquaintance with a noted Burmese delicacy, the pomfret, called *Rup Chánd* by the natives,—a broad flattish fish, in shape something like the John Dory.

The run from Akyab to Calcutta was uneventful. Shortly after we left port it blew pretty fresh; and some of us began to feel as if our sea-legs were out of order. Among the passengers were two pilots, one of whom had had a narrow escape in the cyclone of 1864, being on

board a pilot-brig at the Sandheads which was blown from her anchorage and driven down to Ganjam on the Madras coast. This was about the season for cyclones, which usually occur in the Bay of Bengal towards beginning or end of the rains,—in April and May, or between September and November. However the weather soon moderated, and on Sunday the 2nd May the *Cheduba* was once more ploughing her way up the muddy Hooghly, under a blazing sun that seemed almost hot enough to boil the turbid water as it glided by.

This chapter may fitly conclude with the following extract from the *Calcutta Englishman* of the 3rd June, 1869 :—"We regret to say that fears are entertained that the *Cheduba* has met with the fate of the *Thunder*. The *Cheduba* was bound to Rangoon and carried the following passengers :—Major General Faunce, Lieut. J. Ferguson, 21st Fusiliers,¹ Mrs. Bainbridge, P. Dwyer, a Mahomedan lady, 20 natives and two children ; she left the Sandheads on the morning of Saturday, 15th inst.,² for Rangoon. At midnight on Saturday, the cyclone, which passed over Jessore on 16th, made itself felt at the Sandheads. It appears to have arisen far to the south, and very probably the *Cheduba* felt its full force. The steamer has not since been heard of, and hence it is feared that she succumbed to the violence of the tempest." These fears proved but too well founded, and the voyage just chronicled was the last that the unfortunate *Cheduba* ever accomplished. Like the *Thunder* in 1867, she was lost with all hands, and left no trace except some fragments of wreckage that were cast up in the Sunderbuns and identified as belonging to the ship. There was a report that corpses—some of them European—had been washed ashore on one of the islands at the mouth of the Megna, but so far as I recollect this was not verified by inquiry. I was astonished, some time after, to receive a letter from the chief officer, late of the *Cheduba*, with whom I had been rather intimate on the voyage. He had obtained leave of absence from the ship two days before she sailed, and thus escaped the fate that befel his comrades.

¹ The regiment then stationed at Rangoon.

² Should be *ultimo*.

CHAPTER XII

PURULIA.—FIRST VISIT (CONTINUED).—1869-70

ON Thursday the 6th May I was again at Purulia, and having resumed charge from Captain Walcott, soon fell once more into the daily routine of the place. There had been great *shikár* during my absence, no less than eight bears having fallen to the weapons of Messrs. Pughe (Assistant Policeman) and Garbett junior in four days. The sporting *Jemadár* declared that others were about, and wanted the Sahibs to go and shoot them.

The hot winds were now blowing with a steady scorching blast from the west, the thermometer over ninety in the shade, with no great reduction of temperature, even at night. This is what makes it so trying—the nights are not cool: just before sunrise there is a delicious freshness in the air, but this goes off all too quickly when the orb of day shows its fiery face above the horizon. The hot season is not unhealthy: except for cholera, regarding which there is no rule, the mortuary returns are usually light between March and July: and it is less enervating than the damp steamy period towards end of the rains; but it is a grilling time. Imagine a sky like copper, the earth like brass or bricks, wide stretches bare of grass, others sparsely covered with dry remnants of turf, trees losing their leaves, the general aspect of vegetation brown and brittle, and everything panting for a drop of moisture. Add to this a dense sultry haze brooding over the landscape and limiting the view on the clearest day to some eight or ten miles; and a rushing current of hot air like the draught from a furnace, that commences in the morning, gradually strengthens as the day advances, and dies away towards evening, and some idea may be formed of what the hot winds are like. They may indeed be tempered with well-watered

kuskus tatties that cool the room and fill it with scent of the fragrant grass, but tatties are apt to give cold, and one cannot always be behind them. Besides, the refreshing coolness that strikes any one coming in from the hot air outside soon wears off, and gives place to a dull negative temperature, neither hot nor cold. Perspiration is checked, but the body is not really cool. But even the hot weather has its beauties—it is the Indian spring. The trees do not remain bare, the new foliage quickly replacing the old,—not as in England after an interval of months,—and the tints of the young leaves are delicate and exquisitely beautiful. One tree, the *kusum*, when changing its coat looks at a distance as if covered with rosy bloom. Some have gorgeous flowers: among these is specially to be noticed the *paldsh* (*butea frondosa*). The tree itself is ragged in appearance and of no great size—the foliage dark and sombre; but it bears a brilliant orange-scarlet blossom, in shape something like a lobster's claw, and a striking effect is produced by a group of these trees standing out in the middle of a plain, their scarlet flowers glowing like masses of red-hot coal in the quivering haze that hovers over the earth. The hot winds have at least this advantage: they make people appreciate the rain when it *does* come. And it is wonderful how soon the parched earth revives, and is once more covered with a mantle of kindly green. The roots of grass do not die, but simply lie dormant through the hot months, and spring up fresh and verdant in a few days after the rains begin in earnest.

On Wednesday the 12th May I rode "Charlie" for the first time since the 17th November, and was glad to find I could hold him, with *both* hands.

Our little society was now reinforced by the return of Garbett senior, who had been transferred to Ranchi on special duty (see page 233). He had been away in the western wilds, settling boundaries between Chota Nagpore and some of the tributary states, and was lean as a greyhound from tramping about in the jungles—in splendid condition. Joll was also in the Station, having come over from Burrakur to look after the new Cutcherry building and the Public Works overseer, a portly Baboo who always wore spotless apparel and never seemed to be in a hurry. When the Engineer appeared on the scene, the overseer had to wake up, for his superior was very particular, and if dissatisfied with an arch or anything

passed by the sub, made him pull it down and have it done over again. Joll's advent was always welcomed at Purulia : he was not only a jovial comrade, but also a smart officer and good fellow, who could take a joke without losing his temper. It was beautiful to see him undergo repeated duckings in the Lake at the hands of Wileox and his associates in mischief, and come up smiling after each immersion.

Partly in honour of his visit, and partly because when it is impossible to keep cool the best thing to be done is to go out and get hot, a shooting party was arranged to the old ground at Hura, in the course of which Joll had rather an exciting adventure. In one of the drives, he and young Garbett were posted near each other, when suddenly a bear appeared, making for their *attahs*.¹ Joll fired and hit him in the mouth, not injuring him seriously but making him very savage. He charged straight at his assailant, who having emptied his gun had to run for it, Bruin hard upon his heels. The Engineer displayed great agility and made very good time in the race ; but on bad ground especially a man is no match for a bear, and the latter gained rapidly. Seeing a friendly tree, Joll seized the trunk and dodged round it just in time, the bear being close enough to tear the sleeve of his coat with teeth or claws. It was much too near a thing to be pleasant for the principal performer, but must have looked comical to Garbett, who as soon as he was steady enough from laughing closed the incident with a shot from his rifle. The encounter might have ended badly for Joll, but happily he was none the worse, barring the coat. His rifle too had rather a bad dent in the barrel, having fallen on the stones in the scrimmage.

On Monday the 31st May a squall of wind and rain came on which wrecked the bathing *ghât* by the Lake, the thatched roof being blown clean off the masonry pillars and deposited on the road close by. Purulia was not the only place visited roughly by the winds. Accounts came from Jessore of a severe cyclone that had done much damage about the 16th of the month. This was the storm in which the *Cheduba* was lost, as already mentioned. Shortly after (on the 8th and 9th of June) there was another cyclone in Calcutta, which however did not reach Purulia, and only affected the Station by stopping the Calcutta mail for two days.

¹ The *attahs* or shooting screens were in this case on the ground

Purulia was not very lively in the rains. Ladies were scarce: we had neither croquet nor rackets; and lawn-tennis had not then been invented. The weather was not favourable for shooting and such sports; the best camping season was over, and there was plenty of office-work to keep one at headquarters. So we contented ourselves with rides about the Station, an occasional run after a fox or jackal, and bathing in the Lake,—a never-failing resource to Wilcox and the other Purulia Tritons,—on the border of which a new bathing *ghât* with masonry roof supported on arches, designed by Joll, was rising phoenix-like from the ruins of the old building. The Lake was deep—not less than ten or twelve feet just off the diving platform, and twenty feet and upwards further out, according to the height of the water in the dry or wet season. Besides running headers, diving through rings, over chairs, and other fancy exercises, a favourite pastime was to throw things in and go after them, the depth being such as to test the diver's endurance under water. Wilcox had a fine brass *chillumchee* (hand-basin) which he treated in this way, but he did it once too often, for one day it slipped into an extra deep place or somehow got out of reach and was never recovered.¹ In the absence of noteworthy events, a skip may be made to the month of October, when the rains are looked upon as shortly to be numbered among the things that were, and every one begins to sniff eagerly for the first sign of the cold weather.

We had not however yet seen the last of either the wind or the rain. A certain weather-wise Captain Saxby wrote to the papers predicting a "disturbance" on the 5th October, and when nothing happened on that date, we were inclined to deride him as an alarmist. But Friday the 8th dawned dark and threatening, the wind blowing great guns, and trees down in all directions. I turned out early to inspect the new bathing *ghât*, fearing damage to the building (still unfinished), but found it all right. After looking in at the Cutcherry and Jail, I went on to Devéria's, and met young Garbett and Bedford toiling barefoot through the gale in the same direction. We joined forces and continued our round to my old house, now tenanted by Wilcox and one or two others, boasting a billiard table, and dignified by the name of the Purulia Club. Here we had *chota haziri* and discussed the morning's events.

¹ See Appendix E.—Gem of the Bath-room.

It was now about 8 a.m., and the wind had quite lulled, but it still looked threatening all round. A number of birds, chiefly swallows, came flying about the house, apparently driven in by the storm. This lull continued for about half-an-hour, and then—whew! it came on to blow from the southward, nearly the opposite direction. The gale lasted altogether from about 4 a.m. till noon, during which time the wind veered almost all round the compass; which fact, coupled with the lull that occurred at 8 o'clock, showed that it was a cyclone, and that Purulia was in the centre of the storm.

Everything had to be kept close shut, so finding it not very cheerful in the house, young Garbett and I sallied forth again and walked round the Lake. The wind was blowing with such force that sometimes we had to bend forward and *shove* ourselves along as if we were going up a steep hill. Birds were cowering on the ground, afraid to fly; and some that got up, startled by our approach, went drifting down the gale, head to wind, helplessly fluttering against the blast. It was rather a case of "Heads!" going through the avenue of the Sahib Bándh; as several trees were down, and twigs and branches flying about. The water of the Lake was in commotion, dashing against the stoned face of the dyke in miniature waves. In the bazaar and Station buildings had not suffered much, except in the matter of loose mats and *kutchas* verandahs, which had been touzled a good deal. The mud-walls in this part of the world being stronger than the mat structures of Eastern Bengal had stood firm against a gale that would have levelled frailer edifices. But the havoc among trees was deplorable. The Lake avenue, the chief ornament of Purulia, was fortunately not much disfigured, but in other directions great damage was done. My own compound, one of the prettiest in the Station, was devastated. An avenue of cork-trees leading from the house to the road was almost levelled, two ragged skeletons only remaining. A fine peepul tree (*Ficus religiosa*) was down just outside my bedroom window,—another in the Circuit-house compound across the road. A number of young acacias and cork-trees that had been planted along the Station roads by the late Deputy Commissioner were flat on the ground or twisted out of shape. Not only were boughs, branches and twigs torn off from trees that remained standing, but *leaves* were stripped off by the violence of the wind. Two of the trees in my

avenue had fallen in opposite directions, showing that one must have gone down in the first, the other in the last part of the storm when the wind had veered round. The avenue itself was blocked with fallen trees, and other roads were in similar condition. Men were set to work to clear the fragments, but it was some time before the Station was made tidy again, and the storm left its mark for many a year. The cyclone cleared off the monsoon, and a few days after came the welcome breath of the north wind, heralding the approach of the cold weather.

The Doorga Pooja holidays commenced on the 10th October, and on the 13th Wilcox, Devéria, young Garbett and I left for Toolin on the Subanrekha¹ River, which here forms the western boundary of the Manbhoom District. Our first camp was at Jeypore, principal village in the Pergunnah of that name, where lived the Raja or Zemindar in a pretentious brick house, a man of dubious reputation, but who for some service to Government connected with the Sontal rising had been made an Honorary Magistrate. The old gentleman came to pay his respects, with the usual following of scarecrows, and after solemnly discussing the state of the crops and other local topics we saluted each other with a feeling no doubt of mutual relief, and the audience ended. The tent was pitched in a mango tope near the road, on the borders of a fine lake called the Ranibándh.² The water was very clear; but there were no islands, and the dyke, along which the road passed, was almost treeless; so that in point of scenic effect it compared unfavourably with the Lake at Purulia; but it was a noble sheet of water. The best beats for snipe are under the embankments of these *bándhs*, the percolation through which keeps the fields wet throughout the season when the higher levels are dry and hard. The birds delight in the soft muddy ground, and congregate in such places especially in December and January, when the winter rice has been cut. The Ranibándh was a great place for ducks too in the cold weather, when they might be seen floating on the water in shoals,—red-headed pochards, pintail, gadwalls, white-eyes, golden-eyes, blue-wings, cotton teal, &c. They were hard to get

¹ More accurately Subarnarekha, from the Sanskrit *Subarna* gold and *rekha* a line or streak,—alluding perhaps to the gold that is washed from the bed of this and other rivers in Chota Nagpore.

² The "Queen's Lake"—probably named after the wife of a former Raja.

near, and cunningly kept away from the bank. When put up, they went flying round in flocks, with a great *whish-h-h-h* as they passed overhead, and heavy charges and big shot were needed to bring any to book. But the ducks were not in yet, so we had a swim, and returned to our tope, which showed signs of the late storm, two big trees being down.

Next day (14th) we marched to Jhaldah, residence of another Raja (!), an imbecile spendthrift head over ears in debt, almost an idiot. Wilcox left us here, to attend the wedding of Miss Dalton, our Commissioner's niece, with a young civilian at Ranchi. The tents not coming up, we had to sleep under a tree: the delay was caused by the state of the road, in places almost impassable. On Saturday the 16th we camped at Toolin, where was a staging bungalow overlooking the Subanrekha River—a pretty spot, surrounded by wooded hills. Patches of scrub and “bastard *sál*”¹ jungle were scattered along the river and at the base of the hills, and looked likely places for game, but did not seem to hold much. The servants saw two wolves close to camp next morning; but they had disappeared before the guns were ready.

Sunday and Monday were rainy; but on the 19th the weather cleared, and crossing the river we entered the Lohardugga (Ranchi) district on our way to the Falls of the Subanrekha—native name *Hurrooghág*—where a picnic had been arranged by the Ranchi residents as a wind-up to the wedding festivities. Our route lay up the valley of the Subanrekha, through hilly and well-wooded country. We arrived next day, and found a large party from Ranchi encamped on a little plateau at the top of the Falls, where stood the remains of a bungalow built by Ouseley, a former proconsul, commanding a fine view down the valley, the river winding through dense forest from the foot of the precipice. The height from top to bottom is said to be 320 feet including minor cascades at the top. There are two main falls, the break in the drop being about half-way down. The *Hurrooghág*² is one of the local lions, and was certainly a fine sight, with a strong head of water coming down just after the

¹ *Sál* saplings are in great demand for roofing purposes, and numbers are cut and exported as soon as they are of the proper size. The operation is repeated at intervals; and tracts of wood so treated may contain nothing but young trees springing from the pollarded stems, which are called “bastard *sál*.”

² *Ghág* is the local name for waterfall. *Hurroo* must be phonetic, to represent the rush of water.

rains. We bathed in the river above the falls, keeping well under the lee of the rocks out of the rapids; but even here the current was so strong as fairly to fling one back on plunging in: swimming against it was of course out of the question. The day was spent in the usual picnic fashion—feasting, smoking, gossiping and exploring the picturesque surroundings. Towards evening a move was made to the Judicial Commissioner's camp at Nowagurh towards Ranchi for dinner, after which the party broke up. Our contingent returned to the waterfall and spent the night in one of the tents, retracing our steps next day down the valley of the Subanrekha. The view of the Falls from the foot is very striking; the whole volume of descending water being presented to the eye. Pigeons were flying about the face of the precipitous rocks, and the sun's rays falling on the spray made a lovely rainbow.

On the 25th October we were back at Purulia, the holidays over. Bedford and Hare (a newly-joined Assistant) had been out with a party shooting along the Grand Trunk Road, and had bagged a bear and a wild dog.

On Thursday the 4th November Devéria, young Garbett and I rode out along the Bancoora Road to Sahajuri, eight or nine miles east of Purulia, where bears were reported. The place looked promising, being near some rocky hills, said to abound in caves, on the borders of a large jungly tract extending for many miles east and south of Purulia. A beat was arranged, and the guns were posted in line. The drive was nearly over—the beaters were indeed just appearing at the edge of the jungle—when three bears came slowly out, and walked along in a plodding sort of way as if in no great hurry. They were some sixty yards from my *atta*, too far for a safe shot, but I fired two shells, the effect of which was to send the bears back upon the beaters, one of whom was unfortunately bitten and elawed.¹ The wounded man was sent to hospital; luckily no bones were broken; in a little over three weeks he was discharged cured, and being comforted with rupees would perhaps have risked another mauling to get as much more.

On Tuesday (9th November) a curious accident happened to Garbett senior's Cabul horse "Gazelle," so called in derision of his appearance, which was anything but gazelle-like. His brother was riding after

¹ The wounded man said afterwards that the bear was hit in the hind-leg. This might explain the savage attack.

a paria dog, when the horse put its foot on the lower half of a broken bottle standing upright: the sharp edge gashed the pastern just above the heel, nearly severing the main tendon—the horse was in fact hamstrung. The foot hung loose as if the fetlock had been broken, and the wound bled profusely. Poor Garbett came rushing back, declared that the horse had broken its leg, and asked me to go and shoot it. Devéria and I went down, and seeing the animal's condition at first thought it had better be destroyed at once, so I went and got my rifle. On second thoughts however, and as the owner was away, we decided to give the horse a chance. After some trouble the bleeding was stopped, the foot and leg were put into splints, bandaged, and slung. The horse could not be moved, so a shed was erected over him where he stood, on the roadside close to the bazaar, and there he remained till the wound healed, but was never of much use again.

This being the camping season, I started eastward on the 12th November with young Garbett, who came on the chance of getting some shooting. Our first halt was at Ledoorka, about twelve miles from Purulia on the Bancoora Road, where was an indigo factory belonging to Mr. John Cheke, a large house-owner and indigo planter of Bancoora; and the talukdar Ishwar Chandra Ghosal, employer of the sporting Jemadar, also held land in the vicinity. This gentleman, being here on his "native heath," was in great form,—twisted his moustaches, and swore death and destruction to all the bears in the neighbourhood. Pratab Chandra Das, the Digwar of Rakáb (see p. 227), also joined our camp. The Jemadar had apparently got good information; so it was determined to beat the Sahajuri jungle, in which the man had been mauled a few days before. This was close to camp: after breakfast we went over, arranged the men and took up our positions.

On next page is a rough plan of the ground. The jungle A extends towards rocky hills to the north-east. B is a clearing;—paddy-fields with trees and bushes here and there, surrounded by jungle. C is the western portion of the jungle, bounded by the open plain; and D a narrow isthmus of cover, connecting the big jungles A and C.

Bears were said to be in A; and our first positions were taken up in B,—Garbett and the Jemadar standing at ×, the Digwar with me at *. The bears appeared at the first beat, and being driven

BEAR FIGHT AT
SANDWICH ISLAND.
1890.



out of A, bolted across, Garbett and the Jemadar getting shots, and got into C; so the beaters were sent round to drive them back into A, evidently their headquarters.

We now changed ground, and joining forces the whole party including several natives took up a position in D. Garbett and I stood together in low bush jungle with the Jemadar, who had his own gun: the Digwar carried my second rifle (I had the new breech-loader), and Garbett's spare gun was also entrusted to a native. Very soon a commotion among the beaters showed that the game was roused, and we saw them running and jumping along in a great state of excitement, as they rushed the animals through the cover. Presently out bundled three bears, one apparently full-grown



and two rather smaller, and came rolling along in their usual shambling style, like big monkey-muffs on legs, straight for our position. As they came through the bushes we gave them a warm salute, and Garbett rolled the big one over. This made her savage, and picking herself up she came at us like a steam-engine. My second barrel was given at very close quarters—indeed I fired right down on the bear's head,¹ and Garbett said afterwards it looked as if she were touching the muzzle—but she was not to be stopped even by a 12-bore shell, and knocking me down charged over me into the jungle, seizing my right wrist and giving it a tight nip as she passed. She was evidently hard hit, for

¹ The bear came on like a dog. I have never seen one get on its hind-legs to attack, though they are said to do so. It appeared to be a female with two half-grown cubs—most likely the same that had been turned out a few days before, when the beater was injured.

when I got up my clothes and boots were all over blood, with which the leaves of the bushes where she disappeared were also covered. As she bolted into the jungle she almost brushed against a native who was squatting close behind the firing line, much to his astonishment, but was in too great a hurry to notice him. One of the smaller bears now charged the Jemadar, who having emptied his gun took flight. His foot caught something; down he fell; and the first thing I saw when I picked myself up was the Jemadar, sprawling on his stomach like a frog, with the bear apparently nuzzling at his toes. Meantime Garbett was yelling for his second gun—the bearer not being on the spot when wanted—and having at length got it, blazed one! two! into Master Bruin, making him sing out lustily and hasten after his parent. As he crossed in front, seeing a good broadside chance I put up my rifle and pulled. Snap! went the hammer on the pin, but no report followed, which seemed odd, as the breech-loader had never yet missed fire. It was not till some time after that I remembered having extracted *two* empty cartridges: my faculties must have been confused by the tumble. What became of the third bear I don't know. Strange to say, the other cub did not hurt the Jemadar, and I was almost equally fortunate, though owing to no want of good (or ill) will on the part of my antagonist. My wrist was slightly scratched and swollen, and the sleeve-button of my shooting jacket torn off; but I found that I could move my hand freely, and no real harm was done: it was in fact little more than a bruise from the pressure of the jaws. A tooth broken short off was picked up on the ground where the scrimmage took place; and hunting through the jungle afterwards we found a good deal of blood, some frothy,—also a piece of bone all bloody, which I kept. From these signs it was inferred that the bear's jaw was shattered and my wrist saved by the downward shot. This was the first occasion on which the big rifle showed itself a good investment.

We found none of these bears, and after a fruitless search returned to camp: next day (Saturday, 13th November) the jungle was again beaten without success, so we broke camp and rode on to Hura. Some weeks later the Digwar reported that the bears had been seen close to Sahajuri, one with its jaw smashed; and on the 7th of March following the skin, all in rags, and bones of the big one were brought in to Purulia by

natives, being identified by the fact that the lower jaw on one side was broken. That skull was also added to my collection.

Sunday morning was spent at Hura, to which place the tent had been sent on. After *chota haziri* we took our guns and sallied forth with our friend the Digwar. It was a lovely morning ; and climbing the Mongooria Hill, the neighbourhood of which had been the scene of Joll's waltz with the bear, we had a fine view over the surrounding country. Far as the eye could reach, east north and south, the woods stretched away into the blue distance, where the hills of Sindoorpoor, Kolaboni, Roghunathpore, Pachete and Beharinath loomed dimly like huge fortresses through the morning mist. Towards Purulia in the west the country was more open ; but even that way the jungle extended to some distance. We were now well within the great wooded tract stretching eastward to within a day's march of Bancoora, and south-west through the Pergunnahs of Manbazar and Burrabhoom to the wilds of Singhbhoom and the tributary Mehals of Orissa.

The Mongooria Hill had a great reputation for bears, seeking shelter in its rocky nooks from the burning heat of the almost leafless jungle in the hot weather. But this was the cool season, when Bruin mostly keeps to the lower levels, hunting for white ants and other provender, or foraging for sweets in the sugar-cane plantations, so we saw nothing but a pea-fowl or so, and descending, halted by a pretty little lake at the foot of the hill, where the Digwar entertained us with yarns of the Mutiny, in which he had seen active service. One of his expressions was very characteristic. Speaking in Hindustani (though probably in his own village he would have lapsed into Bengali), when he wanted to say : You have no notion what a fight there was, he put it in this way : *Aisa larai hua, kuch puchiye mut !* Please don't ask me what a shindy there was ! (for I really can give you no idea of it).

After breakfast we parted company, Garbett returning to Purulia in a doolie, while I continued my march towards Bancoora, my next camp being twelve miles further east. "Charlie's" back being slightly galled, Black "Sambo" had to do double duty, and carried me bravely to Chatna, where lived an "enumbered proprietor"—no uncommon object in these parts—who had to be interviewed. In this case matters were complicated by the fact that the Zemindar was a lady, widow of the

deceased Raja, and therefore not visible by the Deputy Commissioner ; so conversation had to be carried on through a third party.

This part of the country was then under a sort of double administration, being for Revenue and Civil purposes subject to Manbhoom, in Magisterial and Police matters to Bancoora. Indeed the Deputy Commissioner's jurisdiction as Collector and Civil Judge extended right into the station of Bancoora, and in a portion of the bazaar one side of the street was (for the above purposes) in Manbhoom, the other in the Bancoora district. On the other hand, the authority of the Bancoora Magistrate overlapped into Manbhoom, covering a large extent of country that was within the Revenue and Civil boundaries of that district. This anomalous arrangement has long since been altered, and both districts are now separate and self-contained, each within its own borders.

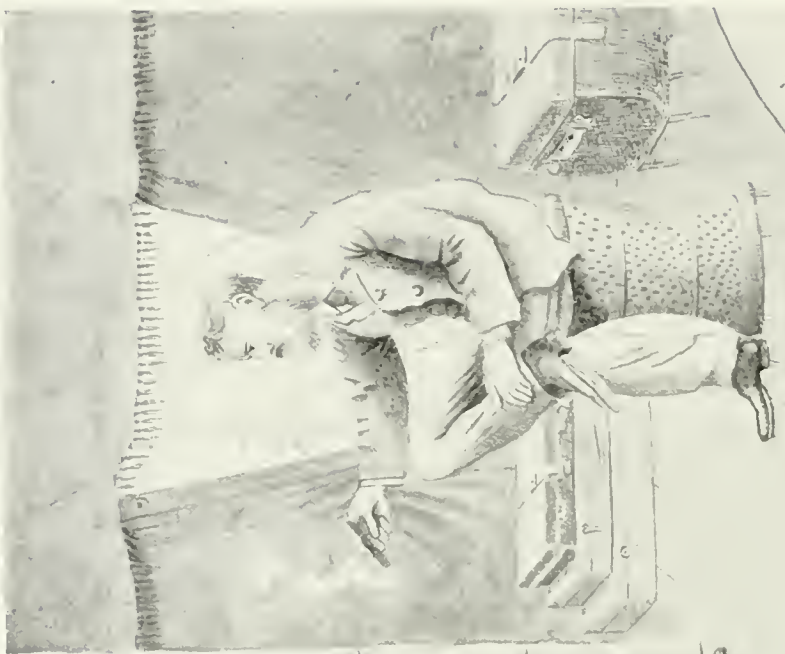
Hearing from a Police officer that the Magistrate of Bancoora was not in the station, I struck off to the southward for Manbazar, principal place in a large Pergunnah of the same name, lying south and east of Purulia. It was an oasis in the forest : in the immediate vicinity of the village the land was cleared and cultivated, but all around lay the jungles of Soopore, Ambikanugger, Burrabhoom and other Pergunnahs. The neighbourhood had a bad reputation for tigers : it was said that no less than eight were then ranging the woods—four going together, one pair, and two singly—and that a man had been killed four days ago at three in the afternoon, going along a road. Allowing a margin for native exaggeration, these reports had probably some foundation, and certainly there was cover enough for anything.

The village consisted of the usual collection of mud-huts, with one or two brick structures, arranged in straggling streets and lanes ; and a little way outside the bazaar was the residence of the Zemindar, larger of course, but in other respects not much better looking than the houses of some of his neighbours. The Zemindar sent his sons in the evening to see me ; but I thought if he had anything to say he should come himself, so it was a case of *darwāza bund*.¹

Next morning (November 20th) he called in person. The Raja, as Zemindars call themselves in Manbhoom, was gorgeously arrayed in silks and cloth of gold. He was rather stout, scarcely past the prime of

¹ "The door is shut." Anglo-Indian for "not at home."

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life, but having been ill perhaps looked older than he was ; intelligent and gentlemanly in appearance, contrasting favourably with other specimens of the landed gentry I had seen elsewhere. Conversation turned on the usual subjects—Pergunnah matters, public health, state of the crops, cattle disease, &c. ; and when these were exhausted the interview terminated and the visitor bowed himself out. Natives are usually difficult to talk to ; and as a rule are especially tongue-tied before an European official ; but there are degrees of reticence or dulness, and the Manbazar Raja was not stupid.

Duties of local inspection over, I returned to Purulia, where the small society had been enlivened by the advent of the Lords from Raneegunge. L. was Devéria's chief,—a timber contractor supplying sleepers for the East Indian Railway, and owned a bucking brute of a Waler which Devéria was riding one day when the beast bolted under some trees, sweeping him clean out of the saddle. As he fell the horse must have lashed out, for one bone of the leg was broken below the knee. This laid Devéria on his back for many a day. He pluckily made light of it, but to a man of his active habits it was no small trial to be confined to the house with a broken limb.

Mention has already been made of the Pachete Raja, the largest proprietor in that part of the country. For misconduct during the Mutiny he had been sent to jail, and for some time kept under surveillance ; since which he had assumed an attitude of sullen reserve, holding aloof from the local officials in his residence at Kashipore, not far from Roghunathpore on the Burrakur Road. One grievance of his was that Government allowed him no higher title than that of Raja. In native documents he was styled *Maharāj Dhirāj Sri Sri Nilmoni Singh Deo Bahádur* ; and considering his ancient descent and great estate there is little doubt that, but for his disloyal conduct, these additions would have been officially recognised. Under the circumstances, it was not expected that the Raja would honour Purulia with a visit ; yet on the 29th November he arrived with a large following. Next day he called on me in state with outriders, attendants bearing silver sticks &c., and accompanied by three of his sons—two grown up, and one quite small. All were attired in many-coloured silks and satins stiff with gold embroidery, and blazed with jewellery. The Raja was a good-looking

man apparently about forty, with fair complexion, of a Tartar or Mongolian rather than Hindoo cast of countenance. With him were his hookah-bardár¹ and pán bearer² with golden hookah and *pán* box, of which he made frequent use during the interview. This seemed rather free and easy, but not being certain about the etiquette I did not object. There was small difficulty in talking to the Raja, who was no disciple of the silent school, and the conversation did not flag. It soon appeared that there was another grievance which he wanted to discuss personally, and which no doubt partly accounted for the visit. It was a matter connected with some troublesome tenants of his estate, in dealing with whom he thought he had been unfairly treated by the authorities. Among other topics, *shikár* had a prominent place: on this the Raja got quite enthusiastic, and exhibited his battery with glee. One of the weapons was a huge single-barrelled rifle: when I said that an elephant might be wanted to carry it he chucked it up and caught it again, to show how little he minded the weight. Bad as the Raja might be, he was a man of some character and good physique, more than could be said for most of the other zemindars of the District, upon whom he looked down with great contempt. It was none the less a relief when he took leave and departed in his palanquin, silver sticks, ontriders, followers and all. He had taken a house in the Station, and was a decided nuisance while he stayed—his house being the centre of attraction to a lot of riff-raff, and the compound turned into a camping ground for elephants, horses, camels, hawks and their attendants, the arrangements connected with which, in the European quarter, were in many ways objectionable. He sometimes went and played billiards at the Club (not that he could really play a bit), and said he would have a table of his own. He was quite uneducated according to Western notions, and pleased with any novelty, like a great baby. Nor did he hesitate to ask for anything that took his fancy; wanted me to spare him this and that from my own stock of saddlery, offered to exchange a horse for one or two of Devéria's dogs, and so on. We were heartily glad when he left the Station.

¹ Pipe bearer. The Eastern water-pipe or hookah—an elaborate arrangement with long snake-like stem—requires a man to carry it about.

² Chewing *pán* leaves (a kind of vine) with betel or areca nut, and a preparation of fine lime, is a favourite native custom.

On the 1st December every one was shocked to hear of poor Ducas's sudden death at Burrakur from the bursting of a main blood-vessel near the heart. He had just called for breakfast, and when the servants came into the room they found him lying on the floor, which was covered with blood. In life a big stout man, his body when put into the coffin was quite shrunk away. He was a general favourite and much missed. "It's an ill wind" &c., and his chief's death gave Joll the acting appointment of Executive Engineer. No small feather in a young Assistant's cap to be so soon put in charge of an important work like the Burrakur Bridge.

In this month Wilcox, young Garbett and I made a flying tour to Echagurh in Patcoom (south of the district), and thence west by north to Jona on the Ranchi Road in the adjoining district of Lohardugga, where a beat had been arranged for a notorious man-eater. Several sportsmen came from Ranchi, and there was quite a large camp; but the affair was a failure, no tiger being seen. On the way back to Purulia Wilcox got bad news of his sister, married to a civilian at Dacca, and hurried down to Calcutta to see her if possible before she left for home. Young Garbett's days at Purulia were numbered: he was gazetted to a cornetcy in the 5th Lancers, and ordered to join his regiment up country by the 16th January—rather sharp work. My own prospects were uncertain, with rumours of impending changes that might involve re-transfer to the Regulation line and reversion to the post of Joint Magistrate, which after eighteen months of independent District charge would have been a mortifying drop down the ladder. Our Christmas was not very festive, and the Old Year closed rather gloomily.

1870.

January 1.—The beginning of the New Year and a new decade witnessed quite a break-up of our little party: Wilcox, already away on a sad errand, had reached Calcutta just too late to see his sister alive: young Garbett to-day bade farewell to Purulia, and I started for camp. My route this time lay northward across the Damooda to the Govindpore Subdivision on the Grand Trunk Road, mostly through bare stony

country. Mackenzie, the Assistant in charge, was devoted to sport and a beautiful shot. He was just now under orders for Kurhurbaree, a Subdivision in the adjoining district of Hazáreebágh, on a coal branch of the East Indian Railway Chord Line¹; but his successor had not yet arrived, and so ardent a Nimrod was not to be deterred from his favourite pursuit by any impending changes. So Monday January 3rd being a holiday he dragged me off some eight or nine miles to a range of hills in search of bears. We were perched on rather wobbly *macháns* in trees, and three bears were turned out, two together and one singly. Mackenzie, before whose post they appeared, peppered the lot and killed one. The two others got away; but both were hit, and it was a sight to see one of them rolling and turning head over heels like an acrobat, while Mackenzie blazed away pitilessly, shot after shot: it is astonishing how much lead bears will sometimes carry away. Next day inspection business was got through, visits being paid to the Cutcherry, Thanah, Lock-up, School,—a ricketty shed called by courtesy a Dispensary, and so on. In the afternoon the indefatigable Mackenzie again hauled me out, snipe-shooting this time, in a light and airy get-up, his nether garments being limited to a pair of bathing drawers—a simple and convenient equipment, always supposing that ladies are not present, and the wearer's feet are hardened enough to disregard sharp stumps, possible thorny branches and stiff rice-stubble. On the way back, the road being ill-defined I lost the way; but Sambo's sagacity landed us safely at Govindpore.

The next halt was at Telcoopee on the Damooda, noted for a collection of ruined temples that stand on the high bank, overlooking the broad sandy bed of the river, easily fordable at this time of year. Shrines of like design occur at different places in the district. They are built of stone or brick, square at the base, with vaulted roof something like an irregular cone or tall bee-hive surmounted by a crown or capital. From Mr. Ball's "Jungle-life in India" it appears that similar structures exist in Orissa, and on the hill Mahendragiri in Ganjam on the Madras coast. At Telcoopee the buildings are of

¹ The line as originally laid out goes by Bhaugulpore and Rajmahal, following the course of the Ganges. The Chord Line, made later, takes a short cut from Seetarampore to Luckee Serai, across the District of the Sontal Pergunnahs.

stone, covered with grotesque carvings, much weather-worn. Each temple contains a gloomy chamber with stone emblems of Hindoo worship, the shrines being consecrated to different gods and goddesses of the Hindoo Pantheon. The history of these temples is obscure ; but perhaps, like Buddhist remains in other parts of India, they were not originally erected for Hindoo worship. Their designers and the people for whom they were built having passed away, the Brahmans have taken possession.

From Telcoopee I marched to Roghunathpore on the Burrakur Road, where a Moonsiff (petty Civil Judge) had to be inspected, as well as a new Cutcherry that he was building for himself under my orders. This was one of the places at that time subject to the Deputy Commissioner of Manbhoom in Civil and Revenue matters, but for Police purposes to the Magistrate of Bancoora. Here are traces of the Old Trunk or "Benares Road," which passes through Manbhoom in a direction roughly parallel to the newer military road to the North-West, but some twenty miles further south. In places it was still distinctly traceable, and at intervals of twelve to fifteen miles were round masonry towers, some topped by ragged timber skeletons, relics of semaphores used for signalling before the electric wire came in. These telegraph towers were erected all along the road between Calcutta and the North-West : the terminal tower stands in Fort William, and bears the time-ball which is dropped daily at noon and gives the time to the City.

Returning to Purulia, I again started (on the 16th January) for the south of the district, of which I had seen very little as yet, commencing with Kesargarh, south-east of Purulia, once the residence of the Pachete family and still inhabited by poor relations of the Raja, who in a state bordering on destitution occupied a corner of the ruins, overgrown with jungle, that marked the site of the old palace. From Kesargarh I went on to Soopore Kuttra, chief place of the Soopore Pergunnah, whereof the Zemindar was an imbecile boy, reduced by a course of evil indulgence to semi-idiotcy. Part of my business at Soopore was to interview this promising youth, who appeared in charge of his uncle. Some tenants of the estate came forward and represented through the Zemindar's pleader, a respectable old gentleman, that the only way to save the property from sale would be to bring it under management of the Court

of Wards. This seemed to be about the state of the case, the only question being whether the estate was not already too encumbered to be saved even by this means. While this was being discussed, the young Raja sat in the tent with a vacant expression, apparently neither knowing nor caring what was going on. He *salám'd* when his uncle told him to do so, but had evidently no ideas or will of his own,—content to obey any order made clear to his dull comprehension, and to act mechanically without interest in the result, according as the wires were pulled from behind. A perfect puppet, he reminded one strongly of the *rois fainéants* in French history, the *maire du palais* being well represented by the Dewán or manager of the estate.

There had been about a week of rainy weather, very unusual at this season, and particularly disagreeable under canvas, but on the 23rd January it cleared up and again became bright, cool and seasonable. This was a wild jungly tract, with rocky hills and caves, likely spots for game. The Sub-Inspector of Police was rather a sporting character, and by his orders a buffalo was tied up, but the bait was not taken. One day however news was brought that a big white bullock had been killed and the blood sucked only, so that the killer might return. An *atta* of leafy branches, in shape something like an Indian wigwam or bell-tent, with peep-holes, had been set up by a tank where the live-bait had been tied. This was now moved to the scene of the “kill,” and the Sub-Inspector and I sat in it. A beast came sure enough, for we heard him twice, once close to the carcase, shaking his ears like a dog. I caught a glimpse of his fur through the leaves, and made it out to be a leopard; but the cover was too dense for a clear view. At last it got too dark to see, so I fired my gun to bring up the men, and we returned.

Our next point was Raipore, a Pergunnah bordering on Midnapore. The Cossye River had to be crossed on the way, here much more picturesque than near Purnia, with rocky bed, falls and rapids, which, though not to compare to the Hurrooghág, are still very pretty. At Raipore was one of my Income-tax Assessors, Baboo Jodoo Náth Chowdhury, who deserves special mention. He showed both tact and judgment in working a most unpopular tax, and there were but few complaints against his decisions.



On the 31st January news came that a man had been carried off by a tiger at a place about ten miles from camp, close to the Midnapore border. By the time we reached the village the body had been recovered, and was slung in a tree in its bloody cloth, a ghastly sight. The right leg was gone from the hip, and tooth-holes in the neck showed how the man had been seized. The widow was there, and on our arrival the unfortunate woman came and prostrated herself, with wild Oriental gestures of grief. The brother of the man killed said that he was one of five, and this was the second who had been so carried off. He showed the spot, a broad sandy cart-track leading through low *sál*-jungle. From his account it appeared that the tiger must have regularly *stalked* the men, who were going along the road after dark, five or six together. He missed one man, who escaped with a claw wound, and then springing on the other unlucky wretch, took him off into the jungle. We followed the trail to where the body had been found, marks of dragging being visible over the sand and dry leaves. Here and there were gouts of dark blood, and in one place was a quantity of black hair, probably licked off by the tiger's rough tongue. Next day a beat was arranged, and before starting the drive I went with the dead man's brother and one or two more to view the ground,—very jungly, with patches of cultivation. On the brink of a tank tracks were found, but not fresh. Suddenly a red-looking animal appeared in the open, which the men declared was a tiger. To me it looked more like a deer, but some natives are very keen-sighted, and possibly they were right. Plenty of beaters were got together, and several Police constables. Two elephants with my camp were put into the line to give the men confidence, and my jemadár of chuprassis, mounted on one, gave the signal to advance by firing a shot. It was a capital drive, the men keeping well in touch, but only a couple of deer were started. With so much cover, it is of course a question whether the right piece was selected; or possibly, with the notorious cunning of a man-eater, the tiger had left the spot.

From Raipore the route lay through hilly and jungly country to Koilapal, where some settlement enquiries had to be made. This was a wild unproductive tract, the soil dry and stony, while the peasants were too poor, and the landlords too unenterprising, to improve matters

by making irrigation *bándhs*, for which there were several good sites. Here also were the remains of a road designed to connect Koilapál with Burrabazar (see p. 221), commenced during the Orissa Famine (1865-6), but since abandoned. Close to Koilapál the road was in fair order, but soon lost itself in the jungle.

From Koilapál we crossed the Gháts, as the southern hill-ranges are called, into the more open country of Burrabhoom; and on the 13th February Wilcox joined the camp from Purulia, much to my delight, as I was tired of being alone.

The Mela or annual Fair at Ranchi was now coming on, and the Commissioner had kindly invited Wilcox and me to spend a few days at his house during the festive week. So heading north-west from Burrabazar we crossed the Subanrekha a little below Toolin, and camped at Sillee in the Lohardugga District. From this to Jona—scene of the unsuccessful tiger-hunt in December—the country is wild and woody, the hills closing in on both sides, and the forest approaching till it skirts the road. For miles we passed through dense jungle, the monotony varied by steep ups and downs, loose stones and rocks, occasional streams, and rickety bridges, across which careful riding was necessary. The level of the country rises gradually from the Subanrekha to Jona, which is on the Ghát or pass leading up to the Ranchi plateau. Purulia is some 600 or 800, Ranchi between 2,000 and 3,000 feet above the sea. The forest extends some little way beyond Jona, and is succeeded by a broad undulating plain, like the country round Purulia, but rather less broken. This part of the road is very monotonous. A few miles short of Ranchi, the Subanrekha is again crossed, here much narrower than on the Manbhoom border. The station of Ranchi is visible from a distance, and the approach at the end of a long march rather wearisome. An avened road was reached at last, leading straight to Col. Dalton's, where all the world was at croquet. This game was then as popular as lawn tennis or golf is now, and for the ladies at least the Croquet Tournament was one of the important events of the Ranchi Mela.

The Commissioner's residence was not unworthy of the high rank of its occupant:—a fine large bungalow with ample portico and deep shady verandahs; that at the back of the house especially roomy, with

a charming view down an avenue of noble trees to the Ranchi Lake, along two sides of which the grounds extended. To call such a place a "compound" would convey an inadequate idea of its proportions: it was more like a gentleman's demesne at home. A brick wall like that of a park separated it from the public road, on which two wide entrances opened. Besides flower and vegetable gardens there was an enclosure for deer, and a beautiful croquet-ground shaded by fine India-rubber trees. A wide expanse of grass dotted here and there with trees was now covered with tents, among which servants were moving about, while at a distance horses picketed and heel-roped were munching their straw, whisking the flies off, or making vicious grabs at the air and stamping as their syces rubbed them down. Further off was the elephant camp, where the big patient brutes were bringing loads of *charra* (forage), chiefly branches of trees and juicy plantain stems, or strolling ponderously down for the luxury of a bath in the Lake. This was a fine sheet of water, with islands, on one of which was a bathing house, but the water was not as clear as that of the Sahib Bándh.

Anglo-Indian hospitality is proverbial, and its traditions were well maintained by Col. Dalton. Being a bachelor, his house was expansive; but its capacity must have been pretty well tested in the *Mela* week. His lady-guests, and there were several, found shelter under his comfortable roof: the gentlemen had tents in the compound; and life under canvas is pleasant enough at Ranchi in the month of February. Hazáribágh was then a military station; and the regiment there quartered (the 107th) sent a large contingent to the festive gathering.

On the evening of our arrival, the 10th Madras Native Infantry gave a ball at Dorunda, the cantonment, about two miles from Ranchi, with which it is connected by a fine broad road lined with the houses of the residents. It is the exception to find a Madras corps stationed in Bengal: the arrangement in this case was found convenient, supplies suitable for Madras sepoy being readily procurable in the neighbourhood.

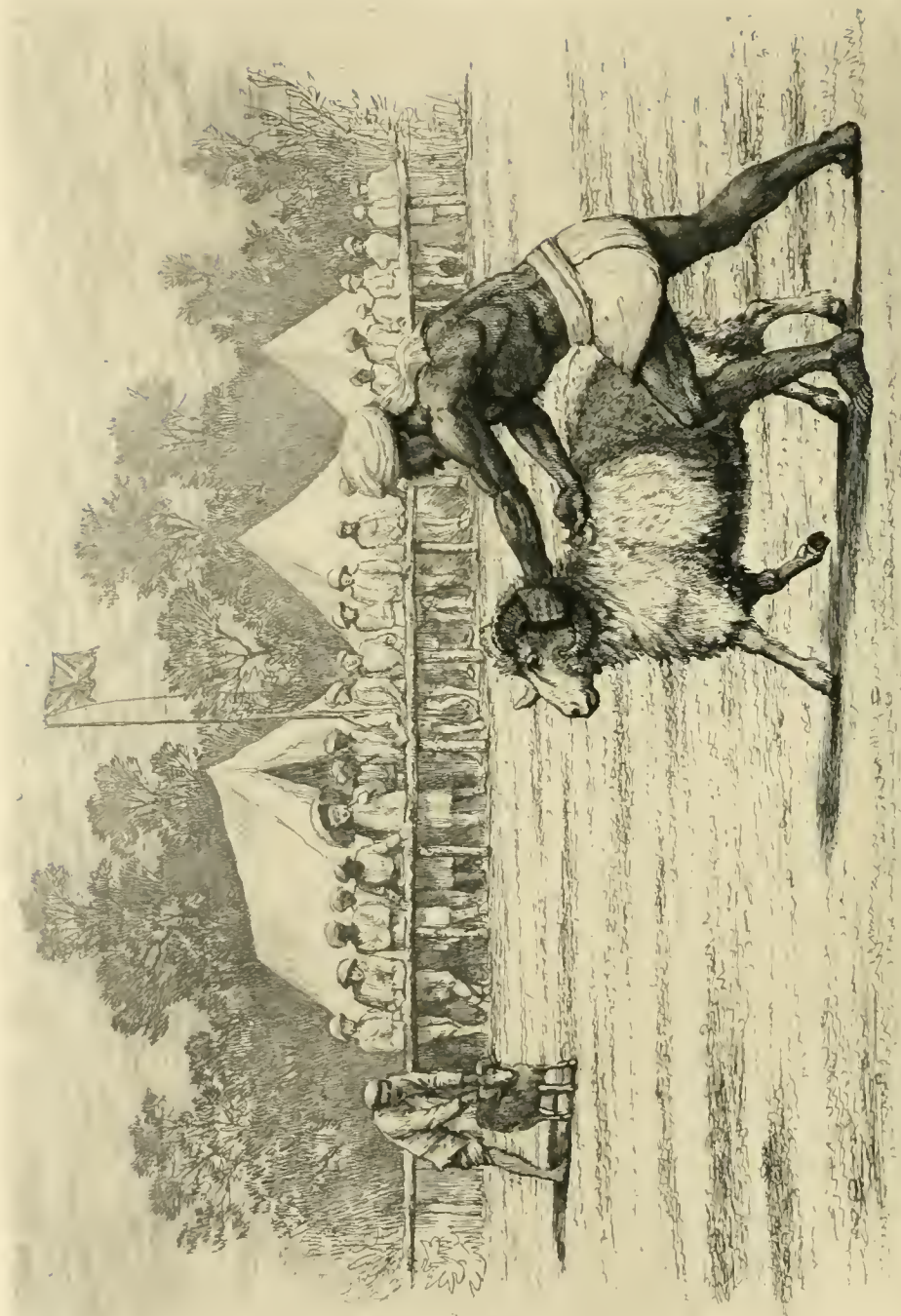
Wednesday the 23rd February was devoted to native sports at Chutia,¹ two or three miles from Ranchi, where the *Mela* is held. Here in an extensive mango-tope tents were pitched; and very lively it

¹ Hence the name of the Division—Chutia (*vulg.* Chota) Nagpore.

looked with the Fair in full swing, crowded with natives of all sorts and conditions,—chiefs and grandees on gorgeously caparisoned elephants, with longer or shorter followings according to their degree. Among the tents, that of the Commissioner was conspicuous from its size and central position, and the flagstaff in front where floated the Union Jack in heavy folds, seeming to spread itself over the dusky crowd in calm benignity and say: Disport yourselves in peace, my children, you are under *my* protection! No better representative of a paternal Government could there be than Col. Dalton, whose long tenure of office had made him familiar with every part of his extensive charge, in which he took the most lively interest; while all, high and low, regarded him with affectionate respect. Many and various races were here represented; besides Hindoos and Mahomedans there were numbers of the local aborigines, chiefly Kols or Uraons, and yet wilder specimens of humanity from the semi-independent States of Jushpore, Jeypore, Sirgooja and others to the west,—savage-looking fellows from the jungles, skilled in wood-craft and the use of the bow.

The Europeans and better class of natives occupied a Grand Stand hung with red cloth, in front of which the sports came off. These comprised sack and three-legged races, jumping, greasy pole climbing and other familiar contests, varied by an elephant-race, and a scurry of native tattoos, with gentlemen riders (Europeans) up. This last was great fun, as also the elephant race, won by a small but swift animal with the Adjutant of the regiment seated on the pad, face to the tail, who encouraged the little *húthi* to do its best by drumming with his heels on its back.

Proceedings commenced daily with the croquet tournament on the ground at Col. Dalton's, round which the spectators disposed themselves at their ease,—taking *chota haziri*, talking "shop" or scandal, and watching the game, at which both sides played in a solemn and business-like manner that was very impressive. The delicate post of umpire was held by a gentleman, who must have had an anxious time, and often found it hard to hold the balance true, and decide nice points at issue among the ladies without putting his foot in it. Croquet was then at the zenith of its popularity, and in great favour at Ranchi, where in the absence of rackets, polo or cricket it almost monopolised the hours



devoted to recreation. The prevailing atmosphere of missionary enterprise was another feature at Ranchi that struck the visitor. The German Lutheran Mission had a strong footing here, drawing converts mostly from among the Kols and other semi-aboriginal tribes. There had lately been a quarrel among the priests which resulted in a number seceding and going over to the Church Missionary Society. How the flock was divided between the two parties, deponent sayeth not; but the spectacle of disunion among their leaders can scarcely have been edifying to the congregation, and may have struck them as a curious object-lesson on the doctrine of brotherly love and mutual tolerance.

The 24th was devoted to athletics for the Europeans; and then came a ram-fight, which was much appreciated by the natives. The two rams, introduced by their bottle-holders at opposite sides of the arena, were at a given signal let go, and starting at speed met in the middle with a shock that would have fractured the skull of any ordinary creature: but sheep, especially fighting rams, must have very thick heads. The onset was repeated once or twice, and for a time the combatants were pretty evenly matched. At last one of the rams had had enough, and failed to come up to time; whereupon his opponent followed up his advantage, and charging with spirit took the other in rear and drove him round the ring without mercy. The evening wound up with dinner in camp at Chutia, and a grand display of fireworks.

On Friday the 25th there were Kol dances at Chutia—girls and men dancing in separate rows, with arms round each others' waists, to the sound of tom-toms, horns, and other native instruments of what was not music to the Western ear. The dancers certainly moved with precision, and the performance was novel and curious; but soon became wearisome, at least to some of the spectators. After tiffin at the camp every one returned to Ranchi for the Judicial Commissioner's Fancy Dress Ball. The costumes were many and various,—Father Time, Britannia, Robin Hood, Bluebeard, a green lady as "Spring," another as a belle of the 18th century in powder and patches, a vivandière, sailors, cavaliers, a gallant Highlander in kilt and tartan shawl, a Greek corsair, bull-fighter, native Raja, Parsee gentleman, and others. Satan was there too, devilish well got up, who, true to his diabolical character, endeavoured to sow discord among the revellers by distributing sly whacks with the end

of his tail. A row nearly followed when one of the victims, a man-of-war's man, *retaliated* by aiming a kick at the Prince of Darkness, who vanished through a side door and was afterwards heard grumbling that Jack couldn't take a joke. Barring this little incident, all went merry as a marriage bell. Bluebeard vindicated his slandered fame and bore himself as a gallant cavalier and squire of dames; the naval and military services fraternised in the persons of a Jack tar and pert little vivandière; the Greek corsair forgot his historic wrongs and hob-nobbed with his deadly foe, the Turkish tyrant; Britannia,—a stout, jolly-looking lady with helmet, shield, and trident,—evidently no less at home on land than on the ocean, showed great activity in the dance; while Father Time, unmindful for the moment of his functions as the All-Destroyer, leaned upon his scythe and gazed benignly on the animated scene.

The festivities were brought to a close on Saturday the 26th, when prizes were distributed at the Chutia Camp, and afterwards Sky Races were got up, a course being improvised by knocking down some earth-banks and putting up flags. The "card" comprised hurdle and pony races, and one or two other events. "Charlie" won the hurdles, but it was rather a walk or canter-over, for there were only two other horses in, of which one burst his girths, and the other didn't like the jumps. However, the winner got a silver cup, which was very nice. "Sambo," ridden by Harrison of the Opium Department, ran a good second in the pony race. This concluded the week's entertainment. Sunday afforded welcome rest after much dissipation; and on Monday afternoon we bade adieu to our kind host, and set our faces eastward for Purulia, where we arrived on the 4th March, not sorry after a long spell of camp to be once more under a roof, having left the last of the cool weather behind on the heights of Jona. A sociable paria dog joined the camp at Lupong, the first stage out from Ranchi, and followed us to Purulia, where he lived for some time at Wilcox's house on friendly terms with the other dogs, who after some demur agreed to tolerate the newcomer. This was unusual, the paria dog showing as a rule strong antipathy to Europeans, human or canine.

The hot weather had now set in, and the west wind blew fiercely by the beginning of April. Two or three days' holiday occurring in Passion Week, an expedition was arranged to our old ground at Hura. The



NEW TALE OF A TUB. 3—25.8.95.

party comprised Devéria, Wilcox and myself, and Garbett was to follow next day. Business commenced on Good Friday (15th April) with a drive at a hill called Ledar-di, a mile or so from camp. Two bears and a leopard were turned out,—the first bear and the leopard coming down the face of the hill in front of the beaters almost together. The jungle being very thin at this season, we could see through the bushes from our *attas* below. The leopard sneaked back among the rocks, but both bears gave fair chances: one I missed, and waiting too long for the other, lost the shot: Wilcox knocked the second bear over, but he got away. Devéria came up doubly disgusted at having got no shots himself and at the bears being let go. Scrambling up the hill we next proceeded to look for the leopard, which after some poking about was turned out of a hole, and went dodging from cover to cover under a hot fire. At last he got into a small cave or crevice in the rock, which nothing would induce him to quit. A hole opened into his retreat from above, down which shots were fired and spears thrust, and in this way he was at last brought to bag; Wilcox descending to the mouth of the cave to see if he was dead, while Devéria held on tight to his tail, which had somehow got through the hole. The performance was something like the “Tale of a Tub,” only in that case it was a “Royal Bengal,” who got his tail through the bung-hole of a cask. The leopard was small, but had a prettily-marked skin. Garbett came in by palki during the night.

Next day (Saturday, 16th April) the first beat was through a small hill at a place called Pabrapahári. Three bears were turned out, one with cubs on her back. Garbett, the Jemadár and Wilcox had shots, but none of the bears were stopped, all three making off in the direction of another small hill, Pokoria. Following up we beat this also. It was intensely hot; and the jungle so dry and burnt up that it was difficult to get enough leaves for the *attas*. The beaters being put in, a bear soon appeared in front of Devéria's post and mine, which were close together. This was a female with cubs, though we did not know it at the time,—probably the one first turned out at Pabrapahári. We both fired, Devéria hitting her through both forepaws. I followed up with the faithful Digwar who carried my second gun, and soon came upon the bear going slowly through the thin jungle, picking her way among the rocks and boulders on the hill-side. A stern-shot having no effect, I

reloaded and quickened my pace, keeping on the slope above the bear, and trying to get forward enough for a broadside chance. As I came up with her she turned short round and charged up the hill, but a lucky shot stopped her in mid career with a shell from the 12-bore rifle through the chest. It struck almost in the middle of the yellowish-white "horse-shoe" mark between the fore-arms, and penetrated through the body to the loins. Having ascertained by pitching stones that she was quite dead, I was proceeding to examine the carcase, when a cub emerged from the mass of black hair¹ and came at me open-mouthed. I had to knock the little beast over with my rifle, and getting my foot on its neck secured it with both hands, in spite of its screams and struggles. While thus engaged I heard more firing, and then Devéria's whistle, which he carried out shooting, sounded shrill through the jungle. Presently he came up and said he had hit another bear very hard, and was signalling me to look out, as the animal had gone my way. Being busy with the cub I was not prepared for another visitor, and luckily this bear did not appear. The cub, slung with a cloth to a pole, was made over to the natives to carry, but the cloth slipped and the cub getting loose ran yelling into the forest, after which no further attempt was made to catch it. The second cub had been killed by one of Devéria's bullets as the bear passed the *attas*.

The bear last hit by Devéria was not found, though we hunted about. It was brought in afterwards, and must have died close to where we were searching. But it takes sharp eyes and good tracking to find even so large an object as a dead bear in a big jungle, among bushes, rocks, caves and ravines.

17th April.—This morning the beat was at Mongooria (see p. 261). The *attas* were arranged in line at foot of the hill, and the beaters were driving towards us over the crest. A bear was turned out, and seen from below, working along the face of the hill and startling some cattle that were grazing in the jungle. Presently he disappeared, and was thought to have broken back across the hill into the jungle on the far side. The beaters were now coming down the hill, and one end of the line had reached Devéria and me, so

¹ This is how the female carries her young, who hold on wonderfully tight to the long hair on her back.



THE HUNTER AND
THE HUNTED.
H. D. C. 1.

seeing the men emerge from the jungle we shouldered our rifles and walked along to Garbett's *atta* further up the line, sending for the ponies to return to camp, as it was terribly hot and about time for breakfast. Suddenly there was a great commotion among the beaters who were still coming down the hill. They began bolting in all directions, and a paria dog belonging to the men came flying out from among the bushes as if the devil had kicked him. Then one of the beaters was seen running for his life through the jungle, the bear hard at his heels, his snout being as it seemed not more than two or three feet from the stern of the chase. The man was wiry and active, and of course did his best; but the rough ground was all in favour of his pursuer, and there was little doubt how the race would end. Seeing nothing else for it I let drive at the bear, and fortunately hit none of the beaters who were scattered about. The shot had the effect of taking off the bear's attention: he left the man and made for the jungle at foot of the hill, which he was destined never to reach. Just as he crossed in front, Devéria gave him a shot behind the shoulder which made him spin round in his tracks, when he received the contents of Devéria's second barrel in the other side, Garbett and I firing at the same time. This was altogether too much for poor Bruin, who with a mournful long-drawn howl gave up the ghost. It was a fine young male in good condition; and had he caught the beater, would doubtless have made a mess of him. The men now crowded round with their spears, axes, bows and arrows, chattering and vehemently gesticulating as they do on these occasions. The hero of the race was also brought forward, and beyond being a little blown seemed none the worse,—rather inclined to treat the matter as a good joke. He was given a drink of brandy and retired rejoicing; but it certainly was a narrow escape. We got back to camp well pleased with the morning's work, and after breakfast superintended the skinning and searching for bullets in the carcasses,—rather a butcherly operation. Next day we returned to Purulia—a hot ride of twenty-one miles.

This expedition was nearly the last bit of excitement before the Station subsided into the sultry monotone of the hot weather, when almost any exertion is an effort. There is little to chronicle; and it is enough to flick, as it were, the heads off any salient incidents that stand up like elephant-grass from the scrub jungle of daily routine. The first

is a sad one: my servant Piroo died suddenly on the 23rd April. I knew he had not been well, but had no idea he was dangerously ill. In the evening I was suddenly told that he was at the last gasp, and rode down to his hut in the bazaar, too late to find the poor fellow alive. He had been with me ever since I was at Dacca in 1867, first as khansamah (butler), afterwards as general factotum; in both capacities a good and faithful servant.

On the 13th May a new Police Assistant joined, Meares by name, who was soon initiated into the ways of the place. On the 22nd news was brought of a bear near the Station, on which Devéria, Meares and I went out. The wily Wilcox, a great authority on *shikár*, scouted the notion of going on such *khubber*; and said his instinct told him it would be useless. The animal, a small male, was found in low thin jungle just across the Cossye, beaten out at once and dropped dead with shots in the head and shoulder. I did not even fire. Returning to Purulia we joined the others at the bathing *ghát* by the Lake, and preserved a discreet silence, whereby it was concluded that we had got nothing. We had our reward when the bear was brought in, and enjoyed our friends' astonishment. Wilcox was well roasted about his "instinct."

About this time the lively Joll suggested as a Happy Thought that I should take a run home on three months' privilege leave. The idea was delightful, and once started soon assumed practical shape. Having taken but one month since arriving in the country, I was entitled to the maximum accumulation of three months; and the journey had just been shortened by completion of the railway through to Bombay *via* Allahabad and Jubbulpore. Col. Dalton recommended the application; passage by P. & O. steamer was booked by Marseilles; and other preparations did not take long.

Garbett declared I must not leave without giving some kind of farewell entertainment, so I invited the Station (including *the* two ladies) to a dinner, which went off as well as could be expected. On the 6th July I solemnly made over the keys of office to Garbett, who was to officiate in my absence, got through the final agonies of packing, had my last bathe in the Lake, and after dinner started with Joll for Burrakur.

The rains had begun in earnest in the latter half of June, and had

freshened things up wonderfully. Instead of a wide expanse of dusty plain with masses of white quartz glaring in the sun, and sheets of black rock absorbing and radiating its dull heat, the eye now rested with a feeling of relief on grassy uplands, while in the newly-ploughed fields the young rice was springing emerald green. The air, no longer choky with hot haze, was bright and clear, and the distant hills looked lovely, the sunlight glancing on rocks and jungle, and white fleecy clouds drifting on the breeze across their slopes. In short, Nature's face had been well washed, and looked all the better for it. So Joll and I, arising like giants refreshed from the palkis in which we had spent the night, were glad to stretch our legs, and walked manfully through Raghunathpore in the fresh morning air. When the sun grew hot we again retired to our "carriages," and made the bearers trot along in style. The Damooda was high but not in flood, and crossing without difficulty we reached Burrakur in time for bath and breakfast, both very acceptable after a night's palki journey.

Next day we made a bad start by missing the only passenger-train; but proceeded to Raneeunge in the guard's van of a goods train. It was not a pleasant journey as it rained hard, but we were glad to get along anyhow. At Raneeunge we were hospitably entertained by an Engineer friend of Joll's; and in the evening the latter returned to Burrakur, while I proceeded through pouring rain to Burdwan, where I caught the up-mail from Calcutta, and taking my ticket for Allahabad was soon careering at the tail of the iron horse over the plains of Hindostan, bound for Bombay, London and intermediate stations!

APPENDIX E.

THE GEM OF THE BATH-ROOM.

(With apologies to Thomas Moore—*cf.* *Light of the Harem.*)

Who has not heard of Purulia's mere,
With its *Ghât* the most *pucka* that Money¹ ere gave,
And a fair flight of steps for those duffers that fear
To venture a header beneath the dark wave?
Oh ! to see it at eve,—when in Wileox's wake
Athletic young Garbett a somersault throws,
And Devéria a moment yet lingers to take
One last pull at his *jungias*² ere flop in he goes !—
When long o'er the water the shadows are thrown,
And each one is trying some dodge of his own.
Here Wilcox the Wily, addicted to sells,
On mischief intent, to the platform is clinging,
While Garbett the elder a handful of shells
With a very long dive from the bottom is bringing.
Or to see it by moonlight,—when mellowly glitters
In the hand of each bather the sherry and bitters ;
When the fire-flies twinkle like wandering sparks,
And the night-heron's song from the Isle of the Wáks³
Floats over the water in cadences sweet
To Wilcox's house, where the young people meet.—

¹ Captain Money, late Deputy-Commissioner, built the old bathing *ghât*.

² Bathing drawers.

³ An egret of nocturnal habits, called *Wák* from its note. As a matter of fact, the Indian night-heron has about as much song in its composition as the Indian nightingale, but poets are licensed. One of the Lake islands was much frequented by water-birds, whose many nests were a nuisance.

Or at morn, when each sleeper reluctant awakes,
 And stretches his limbs ere his Pekoe he takes,
 Reminded too soon by the pitiless sun
 That another fine bright shiny day has begun.¹
 When Hopkinson ² Sahib is up with the day,
 From his bungalow slowly progressing away ;
 While his Mem-Sahib, with *topee* her head for to cover,
 To the *Ghât* above mentioned accomp'nies him over.
 When to the verandah as everyone slopes,
 Where the fat punkah-wallah in slumber lies curled,
 Each, fervently cussing, expresses his hopes
 That it won't be *much* hotter in Lucifer's world !

* * * * *

So reflected that lively young fellow Wilcox,
 As, locking his work in his Cutcherry box,
 He flew to the water, all bent on a spree,
 With the Gem of his Bath-room, his dear *Chillumchee*.³
 And gaily and careless as onward he hied,
 With his favourite tenderly slung by his side,
 He thought to himself, what a Go it would be
 If I lost my adored, my beloved Chillumchee !

There are some chillumchees so unchangingly bright
 That by long gazing at them they pall on the sight ;
 While others again, of unusual size,
 So glitter and flash that they dazzle the eyes.
 This *was* not the splendour—oh, devil a bit,
 That the Gem of the Bath-room so wondrously lit !
 But a soft mellow richness of colour and tone
 Now here and now there by the sunlight was thrown ;
 And where it most lingered no eye could discover,
 For a thin veil of dirt was spread on it all over.

Such, such were the qualifications that stole
 All Wilcox's heart to this precious old bowl :
 And though goblets of silver his board decorated,
 With other utensils, electro and plated,

¹ "Another fine day, Colonel," as the Ensign said. "Ay, my lad," replied the Chief ;
 "and if you live long enough you'll see a good many fine bright sunshiny days in
 India."

² H., one of the rare Benedicks of the Station, bathed early by himself, and
 Mrs. H. went with him to the *ghât* for her morning walk.

³ Brass hand-basin.

Yet this basin of brass he preferred e'en to them,
And called it, his Bath-room's most wonderful Gem !

* * * * *

But where is now this Chillumchee
When by the Lake all pots should be ?
Where is the cherished Bowl—ah, where ?
When baser vessels flout the light,
Shall she, the loved one, not be there,
Nor haste to greet her master's sight ?

Alas !—how very slight a slip
Into the deep such things may tip !
A jolt, a push, a heartless shove
May part us from the thing we love.
And whelming waves will soon rush in
To swell the gulf that lies between ;
Until at length the object bright
Is hid for ever from our sight !

And here I ween 'tis even so ;
The Gem has vanished down below ;
To fish it up, it is no go.
In vain poor Wilcox daily strives
With most uncommon lengthy dives
To win it back,—'tis very plain
He ne'er will see his own again.

So he sits on the bank and howls

THE LAY OF THE BEREAVED.

Oh what a thing has come to pass :—
I've lost my Chillumchee of brass !
And never more shall dip my face in
My own, my ONLY WASHING BASIN ! ! !

THE END.

RICHARD CLAY AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BUNGAY.

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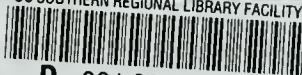
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